

WHERE TWO CREEDS MEET

A BIBLICAL EVALUATION OF
CALVINISM *and* ARMINIANISM

O. GLENN MCKINLEY

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by
O. Glenn McKinley

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Dedication

To Marion, my beloved wife,

Who was led from cold formalism to a joyous new birth and the baptism of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of Wesleyan Arminianism, Whose secretarial help, fervent prayers, and encouragement have contributed much to the publishing of this work,

This book is affectionately dedicated.

Foreword

After having an opportunity to observe the reaction of those who have read *Where Two Creeds Meet*, I am more convinced of the importance of such a work.

Here are the reactions of three strong spiritual leaders:

Dr. Russell V. DeLong, past president of Pasadena College, wrote the author: “Your method is good; the progression of thought is sure; the treatment is extensive ; your logic is unanswerable. ... I most heartily endorse it and enthusiastically recommend it.”

Dr. Oliver G. Wilson, former editor of the Wesleyan *Methodist*, wrote: “I think this is the first attempt I have seen to lay the two theories side by side for a careful analysis. You are to be commended on the thoroughness of your work and the care with which you have avoided caustic remarks.”

Dr. Roy S. Nicholson, retired president of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, wrote: “In this book the author sincerely endeavors to evaluate the two creeds in their emphasis upon three vital points in theology: justification by faith, the security of the believer, and entire sanctification. It is a pleasure to commend this book, which comes from the warm heart of one who passionately loves souls and the deep truths of God’s Word.”

I trust this book will have a wide circulation and reading in order that thousands may be clarified in their thinking on this most vital subject which so much affects the spiritual life and eternal welfare of souls.

MYRON F. BOYD

*Bishop of the Free Methodist
Church*

Preface

While recovering from a serious illness and enjoying sweet communion with my Lord, I was directed to reenter the evangelistic field and do some special writing. A subject was suggested with the impression that I should write a small book on the three meeting points of Calvinism and Arminianism. Seven years of earnest study have followed with an earnest purpose to know and to teach the whole truth on this great controversial subject of Protestantism. Writings on both sides have been carefully studied, and scholarly ministers and teachers have been counseled with sincere purpose to gather truth and present it without vituperation or name calling, but in the spirit of Christian love. A very thorough study of all scripture bearing on this subject has been made with determination to avoid doctrinal coloring and know exactly what the Bible teaches.

The wording of the subject requires a bit of explanation. I see these two branches of Protestantism meeting in mutual desire to win souls and build the Kingdom, either in Christian love or in angry debate. For want of better wording, it seemed my subject should be *Where Two Creeds Meet*. Now a creed is a statement of theology, belief, or doctrine, hence my use of the word is exceeding the common meaning of the term. But, in the light of a familiar connotation, the reader will understand that when I say “creed” I am referring to a school of theology and a branch of Protestantism.

Space forbids much quotation except from the Bible. Should the reader wish to give further study on this subject outside the Bible, or question any of the conclusions herein, I present the bibliography of my study, which I have earnestly pursued: Calvin’s Institutes; Watson’s *Institutes of Theology*; Wiley’s *Christian Theology* ; *The History of Methodism*, by Daniel; *Shall Never Perish*, by Strombeck; *Holiness, the False, and the True*, by Ironside; *Scriptural Freedom from Sin*, by Brockett; *Can a Christian Ever Be Lost?* and *8 Gospel Absurdities*, by Rice; *Eternal Security, a Dangerous Fallacy*, by Neely; *Eternal Security, Insecure*, by White; *The Gift of the Gods*, by Shilling; *101 Arguments Against Eternal Security*, by Johnson; *Eternal Security in the Light of the Scriptures*, by Toole; *Security in Christ*, by Church; *That Burning Question of Final Perseverance*, by Jes-sop; *Security, the False and the True*, by Purkiser; *Checks to Antinomianism*, by Fletcher; *My Sheep Shall Never Perish*, by Bustin; *The Believer’s Security*, by Richford; articles pro and con in religious

periodicals; *The American Encyclopedia*; *The Encyclopedia Britannica*; *The New International Encyclopedia*; *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by Hastings; *The Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, by McClintock and Strong; standard Bible commentaries; *A Manual of Church History*, by Newman; St. Augustine on *Christian Doctrine*; biographies of Calvin, Arminius, Wesley, Luther, Melancthon, and Augustine. Credit is given to these sources, especially for the very condensed historical sketch in Chapter I.

No claim to great theological authority is assumed by the writer. It has been his task to earnestly seek truth from every reliable source and become the humble interpreter of these truths to the masses. Avoiding plagiarism and striving to assimilate and present the best of historical authority and the Bible, the author seeks to edify all who will peruse these pages, with no purpose to widen this great division in Protestantism. It is too wide now. Instead of stimulating controversy, we seek to save some from grievous error and point all to the saving and keeping power of Christ. With only this worthy motive, the writer invites his readers to come with him to the place *Where Two Creeds Meet*.

O. GLENN MCKINLEY

Houghton, New York

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I

Introducing Calvinism and Arminianism

Two Protestant Christians meet. One says, “I am a Calvinist.” The other says, “I am an Arminian.” Thus we are reminded that there are two great creeds in Protestantism. What are these “creeds” and where did we get them? These are interesting questions.

The first one we note is CALVINISM, teaching that the atonement of Christ was made for a limited number of the human race, called the “elect,” who were foreknown and chosen of God from all eternity and elected to be saved, and that these elect would be so effectually called of God that they would be saved and would never apostatize from the faith. Today, many of the followers of Calvinism would disclaim the doctrine of election, but hold strongly to the doctrine of unconditional security, forgetting that the two doctrines are practically inseparable, because the original doctrine was that “the elect cannot apostatize.” These two basic doctrines of Calvinism color the thinking of all Calvinists,

The other creed is ARMINIANISM, believing that “Christ tasted death for every man” and that the elect of the New Testament are “elect according to grace,” those who hear God’s universal call and repent and believe unto salvation, and thus become the elect of God and remain so as long as they meet the conditions of salvation. Obviously these doctrines color the thinking and teaching of all Arminians.

The teachings of these creeds are so diametrically opposed to each other that both cannot be right. One must be wrong. One man said he leaned toward Calvinism because he thought there were more scriptures favoring Calvinism than Arminianism. Is the Bible divided? Does it contradict itself? We sincerely believe that the inspired Word of God is in complete harmony and that not one scripture teaches the wrong view, and that all scripture, properly understood and interpreted in the light of all scripture in harmony, supports the right view. We are endeavoring in this work to search all scripture bearing on these two doctrines or creeds and show how clearly the Scriptures teach the one and contradict the other. Before we go into this scriptural study, let us consider our second question, “Where did we get these creeds?”

A brief historical sketch is most interesting. The Early Church was definitely

“free grace.” The apostles and the Early Church sought to win all men to Christ with no apparent thought that some were not elected to be saved. The doctrines of unconditional election and final perseverance are not found in any of the writings of the Early Church fathers for approximately four centuries after Christ. There are plain historical statements that there are no such doctrines on record before Augustine. “In reference to predestination, the fathers before Augustine are entirely at variance with him. They, like Pelagius, founded predestination upon prescience, upon the foreknowledge of God as to who would make themselves worthy or unworthy of salvation. The Massilians affirmed that Augustine’s doctrine of predestination was opposed to the opinions of the fathers and the sense of the church, that no ecclesiastical author had ever yet explained the Epistle to the Romans as Augustine did, or in such a way as to derive from it a grace that had no respect to the merits of the elect.”¹

“Augustine taught that with fallen humanity in mind, ‘God justly predestinated to punishment a part of the race, while some He benignantly predestinated to grace, not because we were holy but that we might be.’ He maintained the final perseverance of the elect, but admitted that election could not be known in individual sense, only from observation of perseverance to the end.”²

This, then, is Augustine’s teaching: that God from all eternity predestinated some to be saved and passed the rest of the race by with no offer or possibility of salvation, and that those thus elected to salvation would finally persevere (the elect cannot apostatize; hence eternal security), Calvin got this doctrine from Augustine. Frequently quoting Augustine, he fully accepted Augustine’s doctrine of predestination and final perseverance .

But not all of the Church accepted Augustine’s doctrines of predestination and final perseverance, even in the darkest ages. It was a mooted question, tossed back and forth. Some went further than Augustine and taught that God not only predestinated some to be saved, but He as definitely predestinated the rest of the race to damnation, and even predestinated their sinning, which was a doctrine of absolute fatalism. Neither Augustine nor Calvin taught this, though Newman says, “Augustine came perilously near to this conception in making the existence and punishment of evil beings essential to the harmony of the divine plan.” Others definitely opposed predestination and final perseverance, believing and teaching what the Early Church taught and what Arminians of today teach.

Who then is Augustine? Why did he ever come to believe and teach this extreme doctrine against the views of the Early Church, and why did so much of

the Church accept his views? This is a most interesting study.

Augustine was born at Tagaste, north Africa, a.d. 354, of a pagan father and a devout Christian mother, Monica, whose prayers and influence finally won him to Christ, after a very wicked and immoral youth and early maturity, in which he took a common-law wife, who bore him an illegitimate son. Newman says: “Augustine’s was a tempestuous, passionate nature. Despite his wonderful intellectual power, it was with utmost difficulty that he could keep his body under. The excesses and irregularities of his youth and early manhood were to him a lifelong regret, almost of remorse. His ideas of human depravity were derived from the correspondence of his own experience with Paul’s antagonism between the flesh and the spirit, between the law of the mind and the law of the members (Rom. 7). His connections with the Manichaeans for nine years accustomed him to regard human nature as fundamentally evil and human freedom as a delusion. Delivered from the thralldom of Neo-platonism (Plotinus) he was perilously near to exchanging his Manichaean dualism for semi-panteism, and by contemplating God in His absoluteness to lose sight of the relative freedom of man. Yet in contending with the Manichaeans he went so far in his assertion of human freedom as to greatly embarrass him in his controversy with Pelagius.”³

With his great intellectual ability and his “thirst for knowledge” he was awakened to a great interest in philosophy in his nineteenth year. In his pursuit of philosophical studies he ranged widely among both pagan and Christian sources. “In matters of philosophy Plato’s influence was still dominant. Augustine, as well as Origen, was steeped in the Platonic spirit. He [Augustine] read the Latin authors with zest . . . but he deplores his early neglect of the Greek, a language in which he never became proficient.”⁴ For a time he made a superficial study of Christianity, and finding it “uninteresting,” he turned to Cicero’s works and eventually to Manichaeism, which he followed for nine years, after which “he found solace in Neoplatonism.” He was later definitely converted to Christ and renounced Manichaeism, later writing and debating against some of its philosophy, but it is a most serious question as to how much of pagan philosophy he retained, and how much he was influenced in his interpretation of scripture by this pagan philosophical background. The most startling testimony at this point comes from his own pen:

“Whatever has been said by the heathen, we must appropriate to our uses. Moreover, if those who are called philosophers, and especially the Platonists, have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only to not

shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it. . . . All branches of heathen learning have not only false and superstitious fancies and heavy burdens of unnecessary toil, which everyone of us, when going out under the leadership of Christ from fellowship of the heathen, ought to abhor and avoid; but they contain also liberal instruction, which is better adapted to the use of the truth, and some most excellent precepts of morality; and some truths in regard even to the worship of the One God are found among them. . . . These, therefore, the Christian, when he separates himself in spirit from the miserable fellowship of these men, ought to take away from them, and to devote their proper use in preaching the gospel. Their garments, also—that is human institutions such as are adapted to the intercourse with men, which is indispensable to this life—we must take and turn to Christian use.”⁵

When we remember Augustine’s tempestuous, passionate nature, and how deeply he was steeped in pagan philosophy before his conversion, we question his ability to decide just what of pagan philosophy is truth. Temperamental men may be great intellectuals but hardly sound theologians. Since Augustine gave the Church the doctrines of purgatory, prayers for the dead, the damnation of unbaptized infants, and the supreme authority of the Roman church, all of which doctrines we Protestants have repudiated as unscriptural, we seriously question his doctrines of unconditional election and final perseverance, especially since the Church from Pentecost to Augustine did not teach these doctrines. Some very outstanding scholars, including some Calvinist writers, do not hesitate to say that Augustine was greatly influenced by his pagan philosophy in his interpretation of scripture and formation of doctrine.

We quote first from Newman, “The Effects of Manichaeism on the Regular Churches.” “Absurd and unchristian as this system seems to us, it claimed to be the only true Christianity, and by its lofty pretensions and the personal power of many of its advocates drew much of the intellect of the age into its ranks. We may say that with other influences; (a.) it stimulates the ascetical spirit, with the degradation of marriage, the exaltation of virginity, regarding the sexual instinct as absolutely evil and to be overcome by all possible means. (b.) The introduction of pompous ceremonial into the church, (c) The systematization of Christian doctrine. (d.) Sacerdotalism, or the belief that men possess, by virtue of their office, extraordinary power with God. (e.) As a result of this sacerdotalism, the doctrine of indulgences (though in its development other influences can be distinguished) was introduced into the

church.”⁶

“During the fourth and fifth centuries Manichaeism gained great popularity in Italy and North Africa. In the West it came into more vital relations with Christianity, and for a time was a most dangerous rival of orthodoxy. Augustine, the greatest of the Latin Fathers, was for many years connected with the Manichaeans and his modes of thought were greatly affected by this experience.”⁷

“The young Augustine for a time had fellowship with it [Manichaeism]. It seems to have left a permanent impression upon him.”⁸

“When St. Augustine is charged by *Pelagius* with fatalism, he does not disown the certainty and necessity, but only the popular superstitions and impieties of that system.”⁹

Such are the opinions of some very capable scholars and historians.

Still another interesting fact concerns the time Augustine formulated his doctrine of predestination. Again: “The dates of the four following extracts [quotations from Augustine on predestination] are: of the first A.D. 426; of the second A.D. 428; of the third A.D. 421; of the fourth A.D. 417. But the *Liber ad Simplicianum* [one of Augustine’s early works], written A.D. 394, contains substantially the doctrine, though written just as he was crossing the boundary line, and passing from one system to another.”¹⁰

Thus Augustine, fresh from Manichaeism and Neoplatonism, has his doctrine of perseverance. We have been prone to think that he reverted to this doctrine while debating with Pelagius on free will, but Neander says: “Augustine had completed his doctrinal system on this particular side more than ten years before the opinions of Pelagius excited any public controversy.”¹¹

Augustine formed some of his other doctrines later in life, but he seems to have practically come out of Manichaeism and Neoplatonism with his idea of predestination already formed, and this influenced his interpretation of the Bible.

The picture is plain. Augustine comes into Christianity steeped in pagan philosophy and being a great intellectual, he steps to the front in the Church. It would be like taking a converted atheist, without any theological training or time to mature in his Christian life and putting him at the head of a theological seminary. Augustine’s mother had prayed for him until conviction for his deep sin and his powerful conversion seemed to him like irresistible grace and effectual calling. Combining these features of his conversion with remorse for his former sinful life, which gave him a black picture of human depravity, and adding to the mixture his pagan philosophy from Manichaeism and

Neoplatonism, Augustine, when too young a Christian to be a theological authority, came up with what to him was a perfect system of Christian doctrine including absolute human depravity with utter inability to will for good; hence unconditional predestination, effectual calling, irresistible grace, and final perseverance. The great underlying mistake which led him to this delusion and misinterpretation of scripture was his idea of bringing what he thought good from pagan philosophy into his Christian doctrinal system. Newman says, Augustine identified true philosophy (as he saw it) and true religion. He refused to identify true religion with current orthodoxy.” Here was his further mistake. The fathers before him might have taught him much, but he sprang to the leadership, and wholly ignoring the current orthodoxy, some of which at least had been formulated before Constantine’s paganizing influence in the Church, he independently formulated his own system of theology, refusing to “identify true religion with current orthodoxy .” Thus Augustine, fresh from paganism, brought a new and unscriptural doctrine of predestination and eternal security into the Church.

But why did the Church accept these doctrines? The answer is plain. When Constantine the Great made Christianity a state religion, he practically compelled his subjects to accept Christianity. Newman says, “It [paganism] had its revenge in almost complete paganization of the churches that speedily followed the enforced conversion of its unwilling adherents.” Thus the Church was wide open for the pagan delusions offered her and with Augustine she plunged into the dark abyss of paganized Roman Catholicism, for Augustine not only gave the Church unconditional predestination and eternal security, but also the doctrines of purgatory, the damnation of unbaptized infants, prayer for the dead and the supreme authority of the Roman church. “ Augustine says that he should not believe the gospel, if he were not moved thereto by the authority of the church. The central point of Church Authority Augustine places in the See of Peter at Rome. The introduction of the doctrine of purgatory was due to the influence of Augustine. Through the influence of Augustine the doctrine came to prevail in the West that unbaptized infants are lost. Their punishment, he taught, is not merely the negative, or deprivation of the good, but is yet of the mildest sort. The belief in apparitions for the dead [prayer for the dead], opposed by Chrysostom, favored by Augustine, established itself in the church.”¹² Augustine, more than any other church father, was responsible for monasticism and celibacy in the Church, which ideas had pagan roots, back through Neoplatonism, Manichaeism, and Buddhism. Alas that Augustine, a great and

good man and quoted more than any other church father, should be so deluded by paganism and so delude the Church! One writer fittingly says, “With the sweet he brought the bitter.”

Unconditional election and eternal security continued to be mooted questions. Some opposed, while some went so far as to teach that God even predestinated the sins of the nonelect, which was absolute fatalism. When Calvin adopted these doctrines into his system, some opposed and much of his writing in his *Institutes* is given to scourging those who opposed the “decrees.” Thus the two creeds were forming. Luther, an Augustinian monk, said he received more help from Augustine than anyone except St. Paul, but he never strongly advocated these doctrines of Augustine, and Melancthon openly renounced unconditional predestination. Opposition to these doctrines continued to grow and began to make itself felt in the reformed churches and colleges in Holland and finally settled around Arminius, a great scholar, preacher, and professor in the University of Leyden, who, while preparing to write defending the “decrees,” modified his views and taught “free grace” and that it was possible to fall away from Christ and be lost. Thus he gave his name to Arminianism. His chief opponent was Gomer, who “outCalvinized Calvin,” with his extreme views of predestination. Opposition to Arminius was so strong that after a short and stormy career, while preparing to debate his doctrines against Gomer before the civil authorities, he died, apparently of a broken heart over the harsh opposition of his brethren. But the seed had been planted, and a part of the Church was shaking off the pagan remnants of doctrine ; and Protestantism had two definite creeds, which continue to this day.

Then came the Wesleys and many others of like precious faith. Coming enough later in the development of the Protestant Reformation and being far enough removed from pagan Romanism, they were able to bring the Reformation to full stature. Gloriously converted and later filled with the Holy Spirit, which experience he called entire sanctification or Christian perfection (see Chapter III), and with heart aflame, John Wesley became a mighty evangelist and the leading theologian of his day. Though he was the intellectual equal of either Augustine or Calvin, his was the apostolic type of evangelism, and historians say the Wesleyan Revival saved England from revolution. Typically a man of destiny, with his slogan, “The world is my parish,” he became the spiritual father of all Methodism and helped mold the theology of most Protestants outside Calvinism.

But why these “two creeds” in Protestant Christianity ? Could we not shake

off the last remnants of pagan Catholicism and come to a crystal-clear and united understanding of the Word of God? The Wesleyan Arminian view of personal salvation is typically apostolic and the very essence of all evangelical Protestantism. The Wesleyan Arminian view of predestination and conditional security is a clear, balanced interpretation of the Greek text of the New Testament, in harmony with the opinions of the church fathers of the first four centuries of Christendom. Arminian doctrines offer deliverance from pagan-colored Augustinian predestination, which Calvin called “the horrible decrees.” Would to God that the infant Protestant Reformation, born under the ministry of Calvin, Luther, and a host of other noble reformers, still with stench of pagan Catholicism on its garments, might have been purged and grown to full stature in Wesleyan Arminianism!

But alas! such is not the ready response of the carnal heart. Calvin was assertive and intolerant with those who differed with him on Augustinian predestination; and between the times of Calvin and Wesley, Calvinism had dug in its heels and refused to keep pace with unfolding Protestant light. The heart of Arminius was broken by the harsh opposition of his contemporaries. Calvinism became strong in England and even slightly colored our wonderful King James Version of the Bible. Calvinistic doctrines followed the Pilgrims to America. When George Whitefield, the great orator of Methodism, (but more orator than theologian) came to America he was converted to Calvinism by Jonathan Edwards, who in his youth had a great struggle to accept the decrees of God’s supreme sovereignty, as his fathers had taught. Some writers observe that Edwards wrote and taught as though trying to convince himself. He had the flaming heart of a Wesley or a Moody, but his New England revivals seemed to lack the quality of settling people in the faith, and most of our presentday false cults were born in New England since Edwards’ time. Whitefield returned to England with his newfound doctrine to inject a wedge in Methodism, and with Lady Huntington and others laid the foundation of a Calvinistic Methodist church. What could have been a great united movement in Protestantism became divided by the hangover of pagan-colored doctrine.

Many sincere Christians suggest that we just ignore the difference and work together to save souls. A few great souls have succeeded, in keeping the difference in the background and promoting great, union Protestant campaigns, which God has blessed. But too often it is like the noted evangelist who accepted the call to hold a union revival campaign involving those of both creeds, but who was soon weaving his Calvinistic patterns of doctrine strongly in his messages,

and the Arminians felt a false security was being taught and could not wholly support the meetings. Had he been Arminian and begun preaching salvation from all sin and conditional security, the Calvinists would have wrathfully shouted, “Sinless perfection!” and felt their pillar of security had been attacked. The difference cannot be cured just by shaking hands. Principles of saving faith are involved, and even among the most earnest evangelicals the battle rages, while the devil laughs in hellish glee and seeks to divide and conquer,

Is this the best we can hope for? Must there be an armed truce kept between two “creeds” in Protestantism, who can never agree? Is the Bible divided in its teaching? The writer does not think so, and after making what he believes is a more exhaustive study of both creeds and the Word of God than most Christians have had time to do, he believes he has a message for all who will come with him, with open mind and warm heart, to the place “Where Two Creeds Meet.”

Above all, it is not the writer’s purpose to unchristianize those who differ with him. Great and devout men whom he expects to meet in heaven are found on both sides. Wesley said that Whitefield would be so much nearer the throne of God than he that he doubted if he would see him in heaven. But while Wesley was tender with those who differed with him, he never compromised what he felt was truth, and where saving faith was involved, he was a strong defender of the faith. With a like purpose of heart, and a deep desire to be a blessing to all who read these lines, the writer invites his readers to come with him to the three places “Where Two Creeds Meet.”

II

Justification by Faith

(Meeting Place Number One)

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2).

Justification by faith is the great doctrine of the New Testament. It was the great doctrine of the Early Church, but it was lost to much of the Church in the Dark Ages. Hence it became the great doctrine of the Protestant Reformation as the Holy Spirit led honest souls out of the Dark Ages and apostate Catholicism. When Martin Luther was struggling to find peace in his heart, his mind was illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He was enabled to see salvation by faith, was gloriously converted, and became the great German reformer, teaching justification by faith.

John Wesley, the brilliant Oxford scholar, ordained priest of the Church of England, missionary to America, struggling for light and spiritual reality, went to a meeting at Aldersgate and, hearing the commentary of Luther read on the doctrine of justification by faith, was likewise illuminated by the Holy Spirit and received his heartwarming experience of justification by faith.

Thus the great pillar of doctrine of all true Protestantism is justification by faith. The great fault of latterday apostasy and the bane of Modernism is the neglect of, watering down of, or actual hostility to the doctrine and experience of justification by faith. Neither of the two great creeds of Protestantism can claim any monopoly on this doctrine, and neither side can plead total innocence of failure in preaching it or absence of apostates from this doctrine in their ranks. Both creeds definitely meet here with various shades of difference according to the degree of spiritual life possessed. The real, true evangelicals on both sides come very near together on this great doctrine, and in some cases the difference is more that of terminology than of vital spiritual difference. Truly born-again believers, whether Calvinist or Arminian, believe in a heartfelt experience and salvation from actual and willful sin. But even these, who alike believe in the reality of salvation in Christ, have certain doctrinal colorings in which Calvinists and Arminians do not agree. If it were just merely doctrinal and did not involve some vital things, this difference could be ignored. But where saving faith is

involved, we dare not neglect to seek the truth as the Bible teaches it.

Let us first give some attention to definitions. “Justification is that judicial or declarative act of God, by which He pronounces those who believingly accept the propitiatory offering of Christ, as absolved from their sins, released from their penalty, and accepted as righteous before Him.”* Wesley defines justification thus: “That act of God the Father, whereby for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of His Son, He sheweth forth His righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are past.” Both of these definitions are clear and fully express the meaning of such scriptures as: “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (Rom. 8:33); “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4:25); “Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification” (Rom. 5:18).

Justification then is the act of God in declaring men righteous, on condition of repentance and faith on the part of the individual, and it is the state into which man is brought before God when He declares the penitent and believing sinner justified. It is a forensic or judicial act, and, strictly speaking, has no reference to a work of grace in the heart. Hence when we speak of justification by faith, we often actually mean more than the term justification actually means. We are then thinking of the experience of conversion or the new birth with all that is included, viz., justification, regeneration, and the witness of the Spirit. In the proper place we will give consideration to each of these phases of our conversion, but for the present consideration we will think of justification in the limited sense, as indicated by the definition .

We pause here to consider some of the shades of meaning ascribed to justification wherein they color doctrines and affect saving faith. Perhaps if we did not seek to split theological hairs quite so fine, and instead were content with the great and central truths of the Bible, we would have less difficulty in our faith and less inclination to quarrel with others who might not exactly agree with us. The great central truth in justification by faith is that we cannot be justified by works but by faith alone. Through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as a vicarious Offering for all the sins of all the race, we are able to find mercy, forgiveness, and justification before God; and the medium through which we obtain justification is faith.

We will first consider the doctrine of antinomian justification, which has quite a varied history. It was taught and practiced by the Nicolaitans, the

Pelagians, and even by some Lutherans and Arminians. Neither Augustine nor Calvin taught it, though it has been taught by a large wing of Calvinism, often spoken of as “hyper-” or “high” Calvinists. While a great many presentday Calvinists would disclaim the doctrine, it is still held by many of them in one form or another. Some hold that no matter what one does after conversion he is still saved. They do not think of this doctrine as a license to sin, but they still believe that sin loses its damning effect on the child of God. Others would simply say that sin after conversion does not affect the standing of the Christian. Wesley and Fletcher vehemently denounced antinomianism and cast the die for all Wesleyan Arminians against this doctrine. With no unjust reflection on the many Calvinists who are not antinomian, we give consideration to the doctrine wherever it is found.

The word antinomian is from a combination of two Greek words meaning “against law.” Hence those who hold this doctrine teach that we as Christians are absolved from all law, even the moral law; and that since Christ died for all the sins of all the race for all time, our sins—past, present, and future—are all forgiven. No matter what sins we may commit after we are saved, we are still justified. These teachers make the mistake of confusing the atonement as the ground for our justification with redemption as the actual appropriation of our justification. In Rom. 3:26 we are told that Christ is “the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”; and in verse 25 we are reminded that Christ was “set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”

Here is the plain statement that only the sins that are past are remitted when we are justified. If there are any future sins, then they must be dealt with as past sins were: repented of, confessed, and forgiven as we believe on Christ. God does not give a blanket covering for future sins, or any indulgence for future sins. His command to the adulterous woman was, “Go, and sin no more.” This theory of antinomianism is as black as Tetzels indulgence selling in Luther’s time. After the Apostle Paul gave us that wonderful offer of justification by faith in Romans 5, he dealt with this very doctrine of antinomianism in Romans 6, even before he heard of it as a doctrine of the Church, though it was held by the Nicolaitans. It seems that the great apostle was prophetically inspired of God to meet false teaching that would arise in the Church. In verse 1 he asks, “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” and then answers the question in verse 2, “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Then in verse 14 he says, “Sin shall not have dominion over you.” In verse 22 he

plainly teaches that salvation in Christ is imparted and not imputed righteousness. “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

Could words be more plain? Mr. Wesley says: “The judgment of an all-wise God is always according to truth; neither can it ever consist with His unerring wisdom to think that I am innocent, to judge that I am righteous or holy because another is so. He can no more confound me with Christ than with David or Abraham” (Wesley’s sermon on justification). The real truth of the gospel is that Christ died as a vicarious Offering for our sins, and satisfied the claims of a broken law, so we may be forgiven and no longer be under the claims of the law, in the same sense as a pardoned criminal. Ours is in no sense blanket forgiveness for future crimes any more than the pardon by a judge is pardon for future crimes of the criminal.

The antinomian theory leads to grievous error and could well mean the loss of souls who are deceived by this teaching. To preach that sin loses its damning effect to a Christian is to encourage carelessness in Christian living. This teaching led the Nicolaitans to practice the community of women. It has prevented multitudes from seeking and cultivating holiness of heart and life. Human nature is such that, if one is told that all the sins he may commit are already forgiven, he will not be as careful in his life as he would if he knew that willful sin would separate him from God and heaven. This is a most dangerous delusion to preach to sinners. There is not one statement in the Bible to support such a theory, and the Early Church did not preach it. It comes to us from pagan background. Oh, let us beware of such false teaching!

This theory arises from a lack of understanding of God’s wonderful plan of salvation. Justification, as we have seen, is only one phase of the saving of a soul. With justification comes regeneration. Regeneration comes from the Greek word *palin*, meaning “again,” and the word *genesis*, meaning “to be,” combined to mean “to be again” or “to be born again.” In regeneration the Holy Spirit actually comes into the soul bringing the life-giving element into the born-again person. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Cor. 5:17). This Spirit of Christ imparted to the soul breaks the bondage of sin. A number of scriptures are very plain in teaching this truth. “Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21), “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (I John 3:9). “For the law of the Spirit of life in

Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2).

This wonderful experience of regeneration, like justification, is received by faith. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12). These two phases of the work of salvation are identified with each other by Col. 2:13, “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” Christian testimony supports this great truth of the regenerated life. The vilest of sinners have been so transformed that they have actually become new in Christ. The terrible habits of sin have been broken, and lives once sinful have become pure and good through this wonderful, transforming grace of God.

This is the good news of the gospel. This is the glory of the Christian religion, of which no other religion can boast. But this great truth has been often overlooked, and even such great men as Augustine and Calvin evidently did not see a complete remedy for sin in their lives. Augustine, seeing his former corruption, did not believe God could fully deliver from all sin. Calvin regretted his vicious temper but knew no remedy for it. Many doubt salvation from all sin because they believe sin is in the physical body, and interpret Rom. 8:8 to mean that so long as we live in physical bodies we cannot please God. “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” But they fail to read the ninth verse, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

If these and multitudes of others could see only justification, they could still have no faith for complete deliverance from sin, and their only hope was some sort of antinomian justification to absolve them from the damning effects of sin, from which they could never hope to be delivered. They were still living in Rom. 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” which is Paul’s picture of an awakened sinner who has not had the deliverance from sin pictured in Romans 8. Some who do not believe in salvation from sin claim that Romans 7 is Paul’s testimony as a Christian, but in so doing they overlook Romans 8, which records his deliverance from sin.

They say Paul said he was “chief of sinners,” basing their thought on I Tim. 1:15. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” But they forget to read I Tim. 1:12-13, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer,

and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” It is perfectly clear in this passage that Paul was writing of his former life before his conversion when he said he was “chief of sinners,” because he was plainly referring to his persecution of Christ and Christians “which he did in unbelief” and before he received saving faith. He thanks God for “enabling” him, using the Greek word *en-doo-nam-o-o*, meaning “to empower,” which is the same thought as found in Rom. 1:16, “the power [*doo-nam-is*] of God unto salvation.” This failure to see the saving power of Christ is not new, for the Bible distinctly prophesies this very condition in II Tim. 3:5, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power [*doo-nam-is*] thereof.” Thank God that He did not stop with mere legal justification, as wonderful as that is, but gave us a spiritual rebirth and deliverance from the power of sin.

It would be entirely unfair to leave this subject here with the implication that Calvinists do not believe in regeneration, for they do. Many deeply spiritual Calvinists preach the power of salvation, but the doctrinal coloring causes some confusion. Their definition of sin would include every error and mistake, and hence they do not believe in salvation from all sin. Failing to make a distinction between willful sin and human imperfections, they weaken their message of deliverance from sin and thus affect saving faith. For how can an earnest seeker after salvation believe that Christ can save him from sin if he is taught that no one can be delivered from sin in this life? Where both Calvinists and Armenians are truly sincere and really born-again believers, the difference is largely a definition of sin. But a wrong definition can weaken saving faith and that is most unfortunate. The final answer is the Word of God.

Does the Bible definitely teach salvation from sin? We already quoted Matt. 1:21, which plainly states that Jesus will “save his people from their sins”; and I John 3:9, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” There is also I John 1:7, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship, one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,” and I John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Right here we find some opposition from those who would deny God’s power to save from sin by misapplying I John 1:8, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” They say this refers to a Christian after conversion. But this would plainly contradict verse 7, which says we are cleansed from all sin. Verse 8 is simply the answer to that self-righteous person who says that he has no sin to be cleansed from. Then he misapplies verse 10, “If we say that we

have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” Here again the Lord is referring to the selfrighteous person who says, “I have not sinned,” and not to the Christian after conversion. For has he not just said that God would cleanse us from all unrighteousness? The word “forgive” here is *afeeymee*, meaning “to send forth, forsake, lay aside, leave or let alone, omit, put away,” which surely carries the thought of deliverance from sin.

Space would forbid complete quotations of even a small part of the scriptures that support this doctrine of salvation from sin. We will give a few incomplete quotations that clearly express the thought: “Henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6); “He that is dead is freed from sin” (v. 7); “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body” (v. 12); “Sin shall not have dominion over you” (v. 14); “Being then made free from sin” (v. 18); “But now being made free from sin” (v. 22); “Awake to righteousness and sin not” (I Cor. 15:34); “Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins” (I John 3:5); “He that committeth sin is of the devil” (I John 3:8). Here are abundant categorical statements that we are to be saved from sin and live above and apart from sin.

Facing this clear teaching of the Bible on salvation from sin, Calvinists will wrathfully accuse Wesleyan Arminians of teaching “sinless perfection.” Billy Sunday said that if Christians were half as afraid of imperfection as they were perfection, they would be better Christians. If those who so wrathfully oppose Christian perfection will take their concordances and trace down the word “perfection” and the word “perfect,” they will be surprised at how much the Bible says about the matter. No intelligent Wesleyan Arminian will contend for absolute perfection or perfection of service, but he will stand on the Bible doctrine of Christian or heart perfection. We will deal more fully with this teaching in Chapter III.

It is sufficient to say here that if our Calvinistic brethren would spend more time earnestly seeking real salvation from sin and less time crying out, “It cannot be done,” and preaching the soul-deceiving doctrine of antinomianism, we would have a better brand of Protestantism to offer the world. This is the Laodicean age of the lukewarm Church, and spiritual shallowness is so very common that the Nicolaitan, Dark Age doctrine of antinomian justification is a very comfortable, soothing potion for carnal souls who are not willing to humble themselves and seek and search after the grace of God and be delivered from all sin.

The writer remembers with sorrow a lady from a cold, formal church where

no saving gospel was being preached, who started attending his special services and then suddenly stopped. Later she told a friend from the same church who kept coming and was really born again that she was so glad she stopped coming just in time, for if she had gone one more night she would have had to go forward and seek the Lord. Poor soul! Could she not realize that the Holy Spirit was wooing her heart from cold formality to the spiritual reality of the new birth? Could she not realize that her refusal to yield to the Holy Spirit would mean that in that great day Christ will say to her, "I never knew you"? Oh, how many people there are in our churches of today who have never been born again, but are hoping somehow that their nominal assent to Christianity will save them, when Christ plainly said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3)!

Perhaps this is the best place to deal with the other phase of the wonderful experience of conversion to Christ, viz., the witness of the Spirit. We read, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:14-17). Here is plainly stated the fact that we can have the witness of the Spirit or an assurance that we are born into the family of God. We hear much these days about "accepting Christ," but it is too often a mere mental acceptance of Christianity rather than a personal spiritual transaction, wherein a soul, who has humbly repented of his sin and savingly believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, is declared justified before God, regenerated or born again, and has received an assurance of his acceptance with Christ.

Mr. Wesley taught that "the testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God: that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God." The Scriptures describe this witness of the Spirit as "full assurance of understanding" (Col. 2:2), "the full assurance of hope" (Heb. 6:11), "the full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:22). The doctrine of the witness of the Spirit is not a new fanaticism. We have seen that it is clearly taught in the Scriptures. The church fathers and reformers—Origen, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine, Calvin, and Luther—all taught this truth.

Mr. Wesley's testimony is a very clear expression of the witness of the Spirit

in true conversion to Christ: “In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgatestreet, where one was reading Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works on the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.” Testimonies like this of the great founder of Methodism could be multiplied by the millions from Christian biography and, praise God, from both sides of the theological fence. For many who would call themselves Calvinists have gone far away from the antinomian theory of justification and have experienced and testified better than their doctrine, while many Arminians have not measured up to theirs.

Justification by faith is a *wonderful* hope for sinful man. That I, even I, who stood condemned before the laws of a merciful but just God and, utterly without hope, could come to Christ, could throw myself on the mercy of God through the atonement of His Son, could be pardoned of all my transgressions and declared justified before God is the miracle of all miracles, the wonder of all wonders to me. Then to learn through the wonderful Word of God that with justification comes regeneration, a spiritual rebirth, an infusion of the very life of Christ into my weak and sinful soul, so that I am enabled to break away from the habits and practices of sin and by the grace of God, live a pure life, free from the power of sin, is even a greater miracle and wonder to me. Oh, praise the Lord for His unspeakable gift! Then, added to this great wonder, is the fact that, being thus justified and regenerated, I am born into the family of God, become a member of the “body of Christ” and His very own “elect,” have the witness of the Spirit, and, in that assurance, “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:12-13). This is just beyond all I could ever hope or expect, but it is guaranteed to the children of God. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11:33)

Thus we have tarried at the first meeting place and our souls have been thrilled with the study. *It is* a place where we must all meet, for we must be justified before God and we “must be born again.” We have not come to this place with determination to sustain a pet theory or with bitter hostility toward those with whom we differ. We have come only with sincere desire to learn and proclaim the whole truth as it is in Christ, and in this sincerity we have arrived at

some definite conclusions .

We of the two “creeds” agree fully on the doctrine of salvation in Christ. Those who do not accept our Christ as the divine, eternal Son of God and His blood atonement for our sins are misfits on either side of our creedal fence. We of true Wesleyan Arminian faith, and a great many evangelical Calvinists, do not accept antinomian justification. A careful study of Holy Writ has not produced one clear, scriptural statement to support such a blanket indulgence to sin. We make bold to say none can be found. We want no lot or part with the antinomian Nicolaitans or any of their doctrinal km, ancient or modern. We consider antinomianism a most dangerous delusion. If antinomianism could possibly be right, then we who live actual justification by faith and salvation from the practice of sin are safe with a margin. But if the antinomian is wrong, as we are so surely convinced he is, God pity him, whoever he may be or in whatever religious camp he may be found. Dear brethren of Calvinistic faith, beware of the antinomianism in your camp. Wesleyan Arminians, for shame if you are practicing antinomianism!

Then, we of the two “creeds” do not fully agree on regeneration and actual deliverance from sin. We have had time to consider only a few of the many great scriptures that teach salvation from sin. We earnestly plead with you of Calvinistic faith that you open your hearts for a deeper understanding of the Bible promise of salvation from sin. It is the “good news” of the gospel. Just saying, “It cannot be done,” is *no answer to* God’s many clear, positive promises of salvation from sin, and the testimony of millions who have been miraculously saved from sin by faith in the saving power of Christ. Brethren, please forsake this negative attitude and accept the clear teaching of scripture on salvation from all sin. You will have a much greater gospel to present to a sin- ridden, hearthungry world. You will be presenting to the world a Saviour who can “save his people from their sins, and who is “able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” You will be passing from the Protestant Reformation in its infancy to the Reformation grown to full stature through a clearer understanding of scripture and a deeper knowledge of salvation in Christ. We extend to you, across this great divide in Protestantism, the right hand of Christian love and fellowship and invite you to unite with us in presenting a more dynamic message and a saving gospel to

III

The Security of the Believer

(Meeting Place Number Two)

No intelligent, born-again believer can doubt his spiritual security. The Scriptures abound in wonderful promises of Christ's keeping power. Before the writer was an hour old, spiritually, the devil suggested that he could not keep the experience he had received. Being ignorant of Satan's devices, he needed help and the Holy Spirit sweetly whispered that the same God who had saved him could keep him. But there was a condition suggested by the Spirit. It was made so clear to me that, if I fully obeyed and wholly trusted Christ for my keeping, I would never fall. God has kept His promise.

In this condition suggested by the Spirit is the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism. Calvinism says this keeping power is unconditional, while Arminianism says that it is conditional. The Calvinist separates our state of grace from our standing, while the Arminian believes his standing with God is dependent upon his state of grace.

Calvinists differ among themselves and there are at least three different views of unconditional security taught by them. (1) Some believe that if one does backslide it is sure evidence he was never truly converted. (2) Others believe that a soul once saved will be finally saved, though in the meantime he does fall away, for God will get him in some way and he will not be lost. (3) Still others believe that our sins, past, present, and future, are all forgiven and that we will go to heaven no matter what we do after conversion. All three classes argue that once a person is born again he can never be lost. That would be a very comfortable doctrine if true, but a most dangerous delusion if not true, and the final answer is the Word of God.

Does the Bible clearly teach that when one is saved he is eternally saved? Such an all-sweeping doctrine would surely require a clear categorical statement in scripture, so plain that there can be no doubt, and so clear that no special coloring or interpretation is necessary, and such a doctrine must be clearly supported by the harmony of scripture, for "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (II Pet. 1:20). Furthermore, in this study of the harmony of scripture there must not be any contradiction of the theory that when one is saved he is always saved. Our souls are too precious to rest upon mere

human argument. We must have a “Thus saith the Lord.” Intellectual honesty and deep concern for the eternal welfare of our souls demand that we search the Scriptures with entirely open minds. Dear reader, will you bow your head and pray with me?

O God, I dare not be mistaken about the eternal welfare of my soul. Wilt Thou illuminate my mind by Thy Holy Spirit, until I be given to know as Thou dost know regarding the security of my soul? To this end, purge my mind of all preconceived ideas and prejudices, help me to die to all earthly attachments that would bias my judgment, and grant me courage to adjust my thinking and my living to Thy perfect will. Amen.

If you cannot pray this prayer in sincerity, then I pray that, in the course of this study of the Word, spiritual illumination will come and God’s grace be given to help you decide as you will wish you had when you stand before Him. Now to the Word of God!

SCRIPTURES THAT TEACH THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERS

Do the Scriptures teach conditional or unconditional security? We will be looking for a definite categorical statement on this point. Perhaps the scripture on which my personal faith for keeping power rested is a good starting point. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin” (I John 3:9). This, to me, was an assurance that, if I had the seed of Christ in my heart as received at the new birth, I would be kept by the power of Christ from committing sin. How blessedly real this faith was, and God made the promise good in my young life. But I never for one moment thought of this power as being unconditional. The Spirit definitely led me to believe it was conditioned on obedience and faith. There is no definite statement of unconditional grace here.

Let us pass on now to another glorious testimony of spiritual security. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, *nor* angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8; 35-39). How secure in Christ the apostle felt! But, reader, notice one thing: Every condition over which he was triumphant was

outside his own will. They were all outside forces which often did assail the apostle and for which God gave abundant grace. There is no definite statement of any unconditional security here. In fact, the first part of the chapter definitely limits these blessed triumphs to those “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1).

Our friends who want to see unconditional security in this passage will refer us to Rom. 8:29-30: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified”—claiming that we, being predestinated to be saved, cannot fall but are unconditionally kept. This would take us into the doctrine of election, which we will deal with in another place. This very contention would prove that, even though most modern Calvinists would deny the extreme doctrine of election, they must admit that the doctrine of unconditional security is conditioned upon the doctrine of election. There is no middle ground; either we must accept this apostolic testimony of God’s keeping power as conditioned upon not walking “after the flesh,” and therefore being conditional, or we must accept the horrible decrees of election of some to be saved and some to be lost, which is flatly contradicted by God’s “whosoever will” calls. There is no positive declaration of unconditional security here, but a blessed testimony of God’s keeping power available to every soul who will pay the price.

Another wonderful passage of scripture on spiritual security is: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand” (John 10:27-29). How wonderful the promise here that no outside force can pluck us out of God’s hand! But this is by no means unconditional security, for Jesus had just said in verse 25, “I told you and ye believed not.” Hence faith is a condition of becoming a sheep, and by plain inference a condition to all this keeping power. Again you will note that the plucking is from without and not within our own free wills. We will to be the Lord’s and believe, and He keeps. If faith is a condition of becoming a sheep, it is a condition of remaining a sheep. We are plainly told in scripture that we are saved, stand, walk, overcome, and live by faith. This is very definitely a conditional promise but a most blessed one, praise the Lord!

Still another wonderful promise of Christ’s keeping power is to be found in

Rom. 5:20, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." We are told that a better translation would be, "Where sin was full, grace was overflowing." What a glorious promise for those who have fallen so low in sin that there seems no hope! Here is assurance that Christ can "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Here this uttermost salvation is conditioned upon our coming to God through Christ. It is a glorious promise on which many deep-dyed sinners have leaned and found salvation full and free, but it is definitely conditional. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2), is a wonderful promise of saving and keeping power conditioned upon faith.

In I Peter, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," and, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1:5; 4:19), we find some glorious promises of God's keeping power but very definitely conditioned on "faith" and committing ourselves to God. Again, "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:9). We see Christ's keeping power but still no statement of unconditional security. For still more glorious promises of keeping power, we have, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:7, 9), definitely conditioned on "walking" and "confessing." Then we have an assurance of God's faithful care and keeping—"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13). But this follows the very pungent warning of verse 12, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," which flatly contradicts the thought of unconditional security.

Finally, "But ye, beloved, build up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;

hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, 'dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." (Jude 20-25). Here we have one of the greatest promises of spiritual security in the Bible. But notice this: This promise comes on the heels of some fearful warnings against backslidings and exhortations to faithfulness, and the keeping power is definitely conditioned on verses 20 and 21.

This study of the wonderful keeping power of salvation in Christ reveals all the security anyone could ever want. Here is abundant assurance that anyone who will truly repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ can be kept by the grace of God. Here is a great and wonderful security in Christ. Grace we see is "unmerited favor" and more; it is the God-given power to live the Christian life above willful sin. It is the preservation of our spiritual state as well as our spiritual standing. But in many of these precious promises there is a definite condition stated, in others implied, and there is not even one hint of unconditional security. Why should we want such unconditional security? Here is all the security anyone could ever need, and no earnest Christian could ever want Christ to keep him secure while he goes on committing willful sin. The very heart cry of a truly born-again soul is for moral and spiritual rectitude. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:3).

Praise the Lord for conditional security. Space forbids consideration of the many more wonderful promises of Christ's keeping power. We will conclude with: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). When we are born of the Spirit and become children of God, the Spirit of the eternal Son of God, who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," comes into our hearts, enabling us to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. What a wonderful promise of God's power to keep all who will obey and trust Him!

We pass on now to consider some groups of scripture which are the basis of more controversy.

SCRIPTURES COMMONLY USED TO PROVE UNCONDITIONAL SECURITY

In this study we will be considering those scriptures commonly used to prove the doctrine of "unconditional security," in which we will be looking for a definite categorical statement of unconditional eternal security. Perhaps we can

best start with the prayer of our Lord, “And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:11-12,15,20,24).

It is affirmed that this prayer secures us eternally, but where is there any clear statement to that effect? We are glad for this intercessory prayer and we take courage and trust in our mighty Intercessor, but there is no definite statement here of unconditional security. There is no doubt of the power of our Saviour’s prayer; but, like every other Bible promise, it can be made inoperative by our free will.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Rev. 3:5). No one can deny that this IS eternal security, but notice that this takes place when we are “clothed in white raiment.” Thank God, we will be eternally secure when we cross this line of life probation here, and our names will not be blotted out through all eternity, but this text does not promise such security this side of eternity. This wonderful promise is similar to: “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (I Pet. 1:5). Here again is a wonderful promise of keeping power but it is “through faith” and faith is a condition and plainly implies that, if the condition is not kept, the keeping power will be forfeited. There is no definite statement of security here unless we continue through faith in Christ’s keeping. Then we will be “ready to be revealed in the last time.” We will have to search further for a clear statement of unconditional eternal security. Another promise of a similar nature is: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). Surely God will perform the good work which He has begun until the day of Jesus Christ if we will do our part, but there is still no categorical statement of unconditional security here.

Now we turn to another text often used to prove unconditional security, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (I Pet. 1:23). Most assuredly the “seed” and the “word of God” are incorruptible, but this does not prove that the born-again soul may not return to sin and be corrupted. It does prove that to be born again is a wonderful experience and that there is saving power sufficient to keep us if we continue to trust and obey. We find a similar thought in: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). Surely we have passed from a state of spiritual death into a state of spiritual life. But the phrases “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are speaking of the nature of the life we receive and not its duration. As long as we remain in that state of spiritual life, we are sure to die in saving grace and not come into condemnation. But where there are great numbers of scriptures which we will quote later that clearly contradict the doctrine of unconditional security, it is trying to read in something that is not in this text to make it the basis of unconditional security. We have not yet found a clear statement that we cannot fall away and be eternally lost.

Another wonderful promise of the security of believers which is often used to mean unconditional security is, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that Cometh *to* me I will in *no* wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:37-40). Here we see the love of God for His children and His deep purpose to keep us if we will let Him, and raise us up at the last day, but still there is no promise of unconditional keeping power.

In this same category is: “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of *one* the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence

might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:17-20). These are wonderful promises of salvation but in no sense promises of unconditional security.

Those who wish to prove unconditional security will often quote, “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire” (I Cor. 3:14-15), but this is in no sense a categorical statement of unconditional security. God is speaking of our perfection of service as separate from our spiritual relation. It is a wonderful proof that we are not saved by our works. It is a strong reminder that our work can be faulty and be burned up. Works selfishly done and not for the glory of God will not stand the fiery test. In the face of this fact it would be most discouraging if we had to fear that imperfect service would mean the loss of our souls; hence this wonderful promise. But still there is no clear statement here that once saved we can never be lost. It must be implied or read into the scripture, and I would not want to risk my eternal hope on such human additions to God’s Word. Let us take this wonderful promise for what God intends it and not wrest it to our own damnation.

Some think they see unconditional security in this testimony of Paul: “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (II Tim. 4:18). But here again they are reading meaning into the text which is not there. Paul is speaking in this connection of outward opposition which was soon to culminate in martyrdom. In verse 16 he says, “All men forsook me”; and in verse 17, he says, “I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion,” evidently meaning Nero. So he then boasts in the Lord that the Lord will deliver him from every evil work and preserve him unto His heavenly kingdom.

Now we come to a number of passages of scripture in the Book of Hebrews where the term “eternal” is used in reference to our salvation: “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (5:9); “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . . And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (9:12-15). It is not necessary to believe in unconditional security to get the real force of these

glorious promises. Paul is plainly talking about the eternal quality of redemption and salvation and not about our perseverance in it. Redemption and salvation are eternal, and if we keep in the will of God and live in saving faith here, there will be no doubt about our eternal hope. But the most devoted Calvinist will have to agree that there is no categorical statement here that, once I have received this salvation, I am unconditionally saved, and no matter what I do, I am still saved and sure of heaven.

We do need to be reminded that the work of redemption is complete for all eternity, but we also need to be reminded that there are many scriptures which exhort us to keep true, with the warning that we can lose our inheritance. We will be noting some of them in another place in our journey through the Scriptures.

In like vein of thought we read, “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:14). To get at the meaning of this passage, let us first read verses 11-13: “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.” These verses make it plain that the apostle was talking about the Old Testament daily sacrifices in comparison with the sacrifices of our Great High Priest, who “offered one sacrifice for sins for ever.” He is in no sense saying that, once we are saved, we cannot fall away and be lost. The Greek word here translated forever is *dee-ay-nek-es* and means “to carry through” or “perpetually,” and is an entirely different word from the word generally used to denote the thought of eternity. It is plainly descriptive of the quality of Christ’s offering and not the eternal security of the individual. To use it to mean the latter is to lift it clear out of its natural setting and read into it a meaning which is not there. This is just another instance of scripture-wresting which false teachers will resort to in supporting their theory.

Oh, when will people become willing to renounce their blind devotion to a man and a system of teaching and accept the scriptures as they teach in the blessed and enlightening harmony of scriptures? When we try to read more into a scripture than is plainly there, we will find our theory contradicted elsewhere. In another part of our study we will quote many verses of scripture that flatly contradict the theory of unconditional security. Let us take the true meaning of this wonderful scripture and rejoice in the eternal sacrifice of our blessed Lord. Let us not wrest it from its true setting.

Let us continue to consider texts with the word “eternal.” “But the God of all

grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (I Pet. 5:10). “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (I John 5:13). In view of other clear refutations of this doctrinal coloration, only one thing need be said here. The terms “eternal” and “everlasting” as applied to life bestowed on the believer are referring to the quality of that life and not to its duration. It is life from the eternal Son of God and, if kept inviolate through probation, will become the eternal, fixed pattern of the soul. But, again, it is trying to read too much into God’s wonderful Word and promises to claim that once one has received the grace of God it can never be lost. Common Christian experience does not confirm such belief, nor does any text in the Bible clearly and categorically state such an all-sweeping doctrine.

Remember, we are all looking for a plain statement, not doctrinal coloring, and no such statement exists. We can safely challenge all comers on this point. We take nothing from the force of these wonderful promises of divine life imparted to the soul, but the deluding doctrine that by one single act we are forever sealed and elected to salvation through all eternity, irrespective of our moral character subsequent to this great decision, is false. My Bible does not so teach!

On this point of the single act of decision being henceforth unconditional, some affirm that our sins past, present, and future—are all forgiven; hence whatever sin we commit is already forgiven and we are secure. Pretty comfortable doctrine, akin to that of Tetzel of Luther’s time, who went about selling indulgences to commit sin. This doctrine would say in effect: If as a sinner you commit grievous sin, you shall be judged and eventually land in hell; but having once and for all accepted Christ, we can still commit those same sins and, though God as a Father will punish us in this life, He will never judge us for those sins. Again let me challenge all who teach such a doctrine to produce one clear, categorical statement to this effect in the Bible. A careful study of all scripture on this point will produce many plain statements that contradict such teaching.

By what interpretation do they arrive at this shaky conclusion that would delude the multitudes? They will quote, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin” (Col. 1:14), and, “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Heb. 9:12). “For by one offering he

hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified ” (Heb. 10:14). Commenting on these and other scriptures dealing with redemption in Christ, these teachers will say that, since Christ died for all sin, therefore all sins—past, present, and future—are forgiven and hence, whatever we do, all is forgiven. The only logical conclusion of such reasoning would be Universalism, viz., that all sin of all human beings is all forgiven and no one can possibly be lost, for we are plainly told that Christ tasted death for every man. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Heb. 2:9).

The great mistake is this: These teachers confuse the fact of atonement as the ground of justification with the actual appropriation of redemption and justification. All sin is potentially forgiven in Christ but all sin is not actually forgiven until we appropriate it by faith. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of *sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25-26), is clear on that point. Here Christ is the “justifier of him which believeth ” present-tense believing, and that Christ’s righteousness is for the “*sins that are past*.” We are plainly told that only “doers of the law shall be justified” (Rom. 2:13) which positively makes continued justification conditional. “But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor” (Gal. 2:17-18). Here we see a positive refutation of any such notion as being “sinning saints or that future sins are all forgiven. It is plainly stated that, “if I build again the things I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” How could any honest soul believe such a false doctrine in the face of such plain scriptures? Only blind devotion to a beloved creed could produce such deception.

If we want true, biblical security, let us turn to Rom, 6:16-22: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your

members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

The same evangelist who said, “I was a sinner; I am still a sinner,” in trying to put over his doctrine of past, present, and future forgiveness, gives this ridiculous pantomime. He comes up to the gates of heaven and St. Peter, on learning his name, welcomes him in, but the man right behind him is rejected. This man protests that the evangelist does the same things that he does and asks why he is rejected. To this St. Peter replies, “We have his name in the Lamb’s book of life, but we do not have yours.” May God save us from the abominable delusion. It seems to me that if I had been the follower of this creed, the discovery of such illogical and unscriptural teaching as this would cause me to junk the whole creed in search of something sound, safe, and sane. Thank God, it can be found in the clear, plain teachings of the Word of God and a wonderful birth and baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The brother of the aforementioned evangelist plainly states the following in his booklet: “David committed sins of murder and adultery. We must condemn his sins. They were bad. But David’s sins were under the blood of Christ, and in the fiftyfirst Psalm, the prayer of David shows that he had not lost his salvation, but lost the joy of his salvation. David does not ask for restoration of salvation, but he does ask that God will restore the joy of salvation. He prays that God will not break the fellowship, will not cast him away from God’s presence, will not take away the communion of the Holy Spirit.” Such teaching as that would cause foul adulterers and adulteresses to wipe their mouths and say, “I have done no wrong,” and a murderer to say, “I am innocent of blood.” Furthermore, if David had not lost and could not lose his salvation, why would he pray that God would not cast him away and take His Holy Spirit from him? Just how downright ridiculous can a man’s teaching become and he still believe it?

Perhaps this is the place to consider another group of scriptures often used to prove that by one single act of faith we are eternally and unconditionally secured, but where the present tense of the Greek verbs absolutely refutes such teaching:

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:15-16).

Here again it is “believeth”— present tense—instead of the aorist, “believed.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” {John 5:24}. Dr. Daniel Steele, emphasizing the correct translation of the Greek verb tenses, renders this verse, “Verily, verily I say unto you, he that is always hearing my word, and constantly believing on him that sent me, hath eternal life, and is not coming into condemnation, but has passed over from death unto life, and so continues.” Dr. Steele, of Boston University, was a great English and Greek scholar and a man of God, and he says that where the conditions of final salvation are stated in scripture the verb is in the present tense and not the aorist. This is a highly significant point and forever blasts the idea that by one act of believing we are eternally secured. We are saved by faith but we also walk and live by faith. “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (II Cor. 5:7); and, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). Correctly rendering the verb tenses, this verse would read, “He that is perpetually coming to me [present tense] shall not by any means once hunger, and he that is constantly believing in me shall never by any means feel one pang of thirst.” Oh! What a wonderful promise when our Lord’s language is literally interpreted! But there is no unconditional security there.

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25-26) Verse 26 literally reads, “He that believeth persistently shall not by any means die forever.”

“But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31). Tischendorf renders this verse, “That ye might continue to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

It might be argued that we are tampering with the scriptures by thus translating the tenses of the Greek. That is a most unjust accusation. The only way we can get exactly what the Scriptures mean is by carefully searching out the tenses of verbs and shades of meaning of the language in which our Bible was written. We must know the whole truth, for it is the truth that makes us free.

SCRIPTURES THAT DEFINITELY STATE A CONDITION OF FINAL PERSEVERANCE

We have earnestly sought a clear, categorical statement in scripture of unconditional security. None has been found and none can be found. We challenge all comers on this premise. Not only is there no scriptural statement of unconditional security, but there are many clear scriptures which state a condition of final perseverance. We will first consider, “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (Rev. 3:11). “Crown” here signifies eternal inheritance, and the believer is plainly warned that his crown can be taken away. Then, “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10), makes our receiving a crown of life conditional on being faithful unto death. Words could not be more plain.

“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22). “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13). “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Mark 13:13). These are identical. Surely no one would be so foolish in the face of such plain statement of the Word as to doubt that the end means the end of life. Take the scripture as it is and nothing more need be said.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day: lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. 3:12-14). First Paul is speaking to “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling” (v. 1), of whom it is said in verse 6, “Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Speaking to these holy brethren, he warns them of the danger of a “heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God,” which indicates plainly that they had something to depart from. Then he closes the exhortation by saying, “We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” A plain, categorical statement of a condition of final perseverance is before *us*. What will we do with it?

In I Cor. 9:27 we see a blessed apostolic example of disciplining the un sinful human, with the declaration, “Lest that. . . when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” In defense of unconditional security the word

“castaway” is questioned. It is a Greek word *ad-ok-ee-mos*, defined as “unapproved, rejected, worthless, reprobate.” Nothing is said about his works being unapproved. It is plainly stated that if he did not keep his body approved HE would be unapproved or rejected or a reprobate.

Also, we have another wonderful exhortation to faithfulness and a clear statement of conditional final perseverance. “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life” (I Tim. 6:12-19).

This letter is addressed to Timothy, “Thou, O man of God.” No question about profession or possession here. He was “called” unto “eternal life.” He had professed a good profession before many witnesses. He is commanded to “keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Evidently the commandment was that he charge the rich not to be “highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches,” that they do good works and lay “up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” No one wants to argue that we are saved by good works, but certainly good works are plainly made a condition of continuing in salvation and laying hold on eternal life. Brethren, we are so afraid of preaching salvation by works that we lean over backward and disregard some very pointed Bible exhortations to good works as a definite product, a sure evidence, and a positive condition of continuing in a state of saving grace. This does not have to be inferred here. It is plainly stated.

Here is another plain statement of a conditional final salvation: “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). This follows the well-known scripture of reaping what we sow, and plainly

states that he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting,” Then we are told, “We shall reap, if we faint not.” The alternative is plainly stated. If we sow to the flesh, we will reap corruption; and the thought of corruption is definitely associated with death, from which the saint shall be raised in incorruption. The sinner will not be in the first resurrection and his body will not be glorified.

II Tim. 2:12 makes suffering a condition of reigning with Christ, and the warning is that if we deny Him, He will deny us. Matt. 10:33 adds, “. . . before my Father which is in heaven.” Surely this definitely makes eternal salvation conditional.

Jude 20 clearly makes our eternal hope conditional. “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.” We are to build up ourselves on our most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, keep ourselves in the love of God, and look for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. They to whom Paul directed this exhortation definitely had most holy faith, were in the Holy Ghost and in the love of God, but had not yet attained unto (final) eternal life. In some scriptures the quality of eternal life is mentioned as the possession of the Christian, and in others the final, eternal inheritance of eternal life is indicated as here used.

Another very clear statement of conditional final salvation is: “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we *axe* not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10: 35-39). Christian confidence or living faith is here a condition of great recompense of reward, and patience is a definite means of receiving the promise, which promise is definitely associated with the coming of the Lord, “The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back” (and he must have something to draw back from)—the warning indicates definitely the possibility of drawing back unto perdition.

Some, seeking to bolster an unscriptural antinomian justification and unconditional security, will try to juggle words and represent Paul as speaking to those who have not been saved and then suddenly turning to the very ones he is writing to and saying they do not belong to that crowd. The plain fact is that Paul had confidence in the ones he was writing to but was tenderly warning them of dangers, and closed with a fine bit of psychology by saying, “But I do not

believe you will do that, brethren ,” Also note that his exhortation followed a testimony to their faithfulness in the past and stated that they had a better and enduring substance. But he, like many more of us, had seen people bear testimony and give sure evidence of salvation and go through affliction for Christ and then weaken, go back into sin, and again become the servants of sin, of which the Bible plainly says: “He that committeth sin is of the devil.”

In Acts 14:22 we have a wonderful example of the apostle’s anxiety and concern for his people. “ Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” First, he confirmed the souls of his disciples. A close, radical, and faithful minister such as Paul would not confirm the souls of unsaved professors. He would seek to convert them. Then he exhorted them to continue in the faith they were already in, and told them that they “must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Entering into the kingdom of God here is clearly not entering into salvation or saving grace, but our final hope, and it is definitely made conditional. We do *not* get saved by enduring tribulation hut we surely keep saved by being loyal to God and our sacred convictions. It is not that we live in constant slavish fear of eternal torment if we are born again. It is rather that we day by day continue to meet the conditions of saving faith. Salvation is both a work and a walk. We are saved by faith and we also live, walk, and overcome by faith.

Another very pertinent scripture on final perseverance being conditional is: “Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath” (Rom. 2:6-8). There is no question here as to whom Paul is speaking. He plainly states the attitude of Jesus toward both saved and unsaved. Of the saved he says, “Who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.” Final glory is the honor God has promised those who are faithful. Immortality and eternal life as an eternal possession are made definitely conditional. No, we do not preach salvation by works but we preach plain Bible truth, which plainly states that, while we are saved by faith, we keep saved by being faithful. I think now of one prominent writer and defender of extreme Calvinism, sneeringly referring to those who teach that we must “hold out faithful unto the end.” Well, my brother, that is exactly what the Bible plainly states (Heb. 3:14), as we have noted

repeatedly, and anyone should be ashamed to speak or write sneeringly about God's Holy Word, This contention of conditional salvation is clearly supported by: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matt. 7:22) It is true that the Lord goes on to describe these He never knew, but in this verse He definitely makes *doing* the will of God a condition of entering heaven. Whether we want to make doing a result of believing and receiving is of little consequence here, for it is plainly stated that he that doeth the will of God will get to heaven. And in the face of this strong statement of conditional salvation, who can doubt that ceasing to do will result in ceasing to *be* saved and ready for heaven. The sainted John Fletcher in his famous *Checks to Antinomianism* repeatedly makes this plain statement of works'being conditions of final salvation, and abundantly supports his contention by scripture.

There is no categorical statement of unconditional security in the Bible, but we have just noted a goodly number of plain statements of conditions of eternal hope. When one reads these pungent warnings against falling away and being lost, it is not surprising that the Early Church never conceived any such idea as that of unconditional security until she lost her purity and Augustine dragged his Manichean, pagan philosophy into the Church, teaching that God elected some to be saved and some to be lost and the elect could not apostatize. I will take the Scriptures as they were given to us and before they received Augustinian coloring. Let us not be deceived .

SCRIPTURES THAT EXHORT TO FAITHFULNESS AND WARN AGAINST BACKSLIDING AND REPROBATION

We will now examine a few passages of scripture that warn against the danger of backsliding and also plainly teach the danger of being eternally lost. II Pet. 3:13-18 is a very clear passage on this point. Peter opens the chapter by saying he sought to stir up the pure minds of those to whom he refers as "beloved," and states that he and they look for "a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." He exhorts them to be diligent, and states that some people to whom he wrote knew such things; they should beware lest they fall from their own steadfastness. Apparently they too, along with others, could wrest the Scriptures to their own damnation. Since the Bible positively does not clearly state the doctrine of unconditional security, are not those who try to make the

scripture prove this false doctrine wresting the Scriptures and to their own destruction ?

In I Corinthians 10 the apostle proves the parallel relationship of Old Testament people of God's chosen race with New Testament Christians, clearly stating that they fell away from God and were destroyed, saying that these things had happened as ensamples, and then warns us to take heed lest we fall. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (v. 12). Surely we are not so stupid as to try to argue that these Old Testament worthies were not lost and that God would be less severe with us than with them. In fact, Paul plainly states that the "times" of Old Testament and primitive ignorance "God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). In Heb. 10:28-29 he makes the comparison of light of the Old and New Testaments by noting Old Testament punishment for wrongdoing and says, "Of how much sorer punishment" will New Testament backsliders be thought worthy? Unconditional security is plainly denied here.

A very pungent warning of falling away and being left behind when Christ comes is found in Luke 21:34-36. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." This passage is too plain for comment.

"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath

forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence *to* make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:1-11).

Peter writes to “them that have obtained like precious faith,” to whom are “given ... all things that pertain unto life and godliness,” and who have “exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” No doubt about definite conversion here! They are then exhorted to add to their faith certain Christian graces, and with the promise that they will “neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Also Peter warns that if we lack these things we have forgotten that we have been purged from our old sins. Then, again, we are warned to “give diligence to make your calling and election sure,” with the promise that we “shall never fall,” but unto us shall be ministered an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom. Failing to thus persevere, we will not have an entrance into the everlasting Kingdom, Remember, all this is said to people of “like precious faith” and who are called “brethren.” Incidentally, let us not forget that our “election” is here definitely conditioned upon our diligence. “Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking *to* them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43), and, “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Another warm exhortation to faithfulness, with the danger of being lost, is: “Would to God ye could bear with me in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (II Cor. 11:1-3). Note that they were “espoused ... to one husband” to be presented “a chaste virgin to Christ,” and Paul was jealous over them with a godly jealousy. Then he likens their possible fall to that of Eve, which was a fall to eternal damnation, but for the possibility of salvation in Christ. These had received salvation in Christ but could fall like Eve and lose their salvation as Eve lost her relation to God.

Again we see this warning: “And you, that were sometime alienated and

enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable ... in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which was under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister” (Col. 1:21-23). They had been reconciled through Christ, and were called “saints and faithful brethren” in verse 1, and had a hope laid up for them in heaven, according to verse 5. Then after a very warm exhortation and statement of his concern and prayers for their faithfulness, he climaxes his thought by saying that Christ reconciled them to present them holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight, IF they continued in the faith and were not moved away from the gospel.

Some able Bible scholars believe there are several warnings in the Epistle to the Colossians directed against the philosophy then threatening the Church through the Nicolaitans. Prominent among these warnings was: “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8). Note the words “vain philosophies,” no doubt meaning the pagan Greek and Persian philosophies held by the Gnostics and then the Manichaeans, and later by the Nicolaitans. This philosophy taught that Mani chose some and rejected others, and those chosen would never fall away from Mani. Augustine was a Manichaean before his conversion and the Manichaean thoughtcoloring led him to misinterpret scripture.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. 3:12-14). “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. 4:11). In both references the writer is using the example of the falling away of the Jews, and calling the people he is warning “brethren,” he warns them against departing from the living God and says, “We are made partakers of Christ” (very evidently referring to our eternal hope) “IF we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” No amount of wresting scripture can destroy the clear teaching of the danger of falling away and being eternally lost which is found in this warning.

The harmony of these scriptures on this subject of Christian faithfulness as the only preventive of losing our souls stands unanswerable to anyone who is

honest and not emotionally committed to the pagan, Manichaeian, Augustinian, Roman Catholic, Dark Age doctrine given to Protestantism by Calvin. O brethren, let us come all the way out of the Dark Ages and Romanism and accept the original concepts of the Church in her purity, fresh from Pentecost.

THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION OR ELECTION

We come now to the doctrine of election or predestination. Many followers of Calvinism today would disclaim any connection with this doctrine, and others would affirm it only in a limited sense. But the original teaching of Augustine and Calvin was that some were elected or predestinated to be saved while others were elected or predestinated to be lost, from all eternity, and out of this predestination or election grows the doctrine of eternal security, viz., that the elect cannot apostatize. Perhaps the “Westminster Confession of Faith” is the best description of the doctrine,

“Westminster Confession of Faith” (Predestination)

“By the decree of God for the minifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

“These men and angels, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designated; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

“Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith and good works, or perseverance in either of them or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving Him thereto, and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

“As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved but the elect only.

“The rest of mankind God was pleased according to the unsearchable

counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

“Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when, and where, and how He pleases. So are all other elect persons. Others not elected, cannot be saved . . . and to assert and maintain that they may is very pernicious and to be detested.

“They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but they shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their free will, *but* upon the immutability of the decree of election.”

*“Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination,” by
John Wesley*

Now let us consider Wesley’s answer to this doctrine as the best expression of the clear Arminian view of the doctrine of predestination.

“1. God delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but would that all should live, and be saved, and hath given His Son, that all that believe on Him should be saved. He is the true light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world. And this light would work out the salvation of all if not resisted.

“2. But some assert that God by an eternal and unchangable decree hath predestinated to eternal damnation the far greater part of mankind, and that absolutely, without any regard to their works, but only for the showing the glory of His justice, and that for the bringing this about, He hath appointed miserable souls necessarily to walk in their wicked ways, that so His justice may lay hold on them.

“3. This doctrine is novel. In the first four hundred years after Christ, no mention is made of it by any writer, great or small; in any part of the Christian Church. Foundations of it were laid in the later writings of Augustine, when unguardedly writing against Pelagius. It was afterward taught by Dominicus, a popish friar, and the monks of his order, and at last, it was unhappily taken up by John Calvin. This doctrine is First: injurious to God, because it makes Him the author of all sin; Second: it is injurious because it represents Him as delighting in the death of sinners, expressly contrary to His own declaration (Ezek. 33:11; I Tim. 2:4); Third: this doctrine is highly injurious to Christ, our mediator, to the

efficacy and excellency of His Gospel. It supposes His mediation to be necessarily of no effect with regard to the greater part of mankind; Fourth: this doctrine makes the coming of Christ and His sacrifice upon the cross, instead of being a fruit of God's love to the world, to be one of the severest acts of God's indignation against mankind; it being only ordained (according to this doctrine) to save very few, and for the hardening and increasing the demnation of the far greater number of mankind; namely all those who do not believe; and the cause of this unbelief, according to this doctrine, is the counsel and decree of God; Sixth: this doctrine is highly injurious to mankind; for it puts them in a far worse condition than the devils in Hell. For these were sometime in capacity to have stood. They might have kept their happy estate but would not. Whereas, according to this doctrine, many millions of men are tormented forever, who were never happy, never could be and never can be. Again, devils will not be punished for neglecting a great salvation: but human creatures will. In direct opposition to this, we affirm that God hath willed all to be saved; and hath given His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might be saved. There is hardly any other article of the Christian Faith so frequently, plainly and positively asserted. It is that which makes the preaching of the Gospel "Glad tidings to all" (Luke 2:10). Otherwise had this salvation been absolutely confined to a few, it would have been sad tidings of great sorrow to most people. Read: Col. 1:28; I Tim. 2:1-6; Heb. 2:9; John 3:17; 12:47; II Pet. 2:3, 9; Ezek. 33:11; I John 2:1-2; Ps. 17:14; Isa. 13:11; Matt. 18:7; John 7:7-8, 26; 12:19; 14:17; 15:18-19; 18:20; I Cor. 1: 21; 2:12; 6:2; Gal. 6:14; Jas. 1:27; II Pet. 2:20; I John 2:15; 3:1; 4:4-5."

Notes from Wiley's Theology: "Five Points of Controversy"

Out of the controversy between Calvinism and the followers of Arminius comes "The Five Points of Controversy" by the Remonstrants and the "Five Points of Controversy from the Calvinistic Standpoint."

"The doctrine of the Remonstrants is set forth in five propositions. These are known as the "Five Points of Controversy between the disciples of Arminius and Calvin." They are given by Mosheim as follows:

"1. 'That God, from all eternity, determined to bestow salvation on those, as He foresaw, would persevere unto the end in their faith in Jesus Christ, and to inflict everlasting punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist, to the end of life, His divine succors.

“2. ‘That Jesus Christ, by His death and suffering, made an atonement for the sins of mankind in general, and of every individual in particular; that, however, none but those who believe in Him can be partakers of that divine benefit.

“3. ‘That true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers or from the force and operation of free will, since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable of thinking or doing any good thing; and that therefore it is necessary to his conversion and salvation that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

“4. “That this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a corrupt nature, begins, advances, and brings to perfection everything that can be called good in man; and that, consequently, all good works, without exception, are to be attributed to God alone, and to the operation of His grace; that, nevertheless, this grace does not force the man to act against his inclination, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse will of the impenitent sinner.

“5. “‘That they who are united to Christ by faith are thereby furnished with abundant strength and succor sufficient to enable them to triumph over the seductions of Satan and the allurements of sin; nevertheless they may, by the neglect of these succors, fall from grace, and, dying in such a state, may finally perish. This point was stated at first doubtfully, but afterward positively as a settled doctrine.’

“From the Calvinistic standpoint, the Five Points are stated as follows: (1) Unconditional Election; (2) Limited Atonement; (3) Natural Inability; (4) Irresistible Grace; and (5) Final Perseverance. Sometimes they are expressed in the following terms: (1) Predestination; (2) Limited Atonement; (3) Total Depravity; (4) Effectual Calling; and (5) Final Perseverance.”

You will note that Wesley affirms that “in the first four hundred years after Christ no mention is made of it [the doctrine of election] by any writer, great or small, in any part of the Christian Church.” Modern scholars also hold the same opinion as Wesley. Augustine brought his doctrine of predestination and final perseverance into the Church from paganism, and the Church was not spiritually alert enough to detect the error. The Early Church fresh from Pentecost did not teach any such doctrine. To me this is very significant. This doctrine, then, is Augustinianism, as are also the doctrine of “the damnation of unbaptized infants” and the doctrine of “the supremacy of the Church,” and other doctrines

of the Roman church in her apostasy and the Dark Ages. Predestination, then, is a doctrine of the Dark Ages and apostate Christianity, and not the doctrine of the Church fresh from Pentecost or in her purity of the first few centuries. This might be called man's argument but it is highly significant.

The final question, however, is: Do *the Scriptures teach any such doctrine*? Three classes of scripture will fully answer this question: first, scriptures teaching a universal atonement instead of a limited atonement as predestinarians teach; second, scriptures presenting a universal invitation to all sinners, noting in passing the ridiculous doctrine of "effectual calling"; third, a careful analysis of the scriptures used to prove the doctrine of election or predestination.

The idea of a limited atonement apparently never occurred to the Early Church fathers. They preached "free grace" for everyone and were evangelists of the highest order. A few very clear scriptural statements will be sufficient, such as: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2). "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" {Heb. 2:9). "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his *only* begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:15-16). Then there are those scriptures like, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9); "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (John 2:2). How could anyone state that God elected some to be damned in the face of these scriptures? Surely no one can candidly read these plain statements of scripture and doubt that Christ tasted death for every man.

A scripture that is sometimes used to prove a limited atonement is: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). The Greek word translated "many" is *poloos* and means "much, many, or altogether." It is used to indicate the great reach of the atonement and, in the light of the above scriptures, proves rather than disproves a universal atonement. There is no thought in the original word of distinguishing a portion from the whole.

These are positive scriptures definitely and categorically stated that Christ

died for all and is not willing that any should perish. Over against these there is not one categorical statement of a limited atonement to be found in the Bible.

Further proof of the unlimited atonement is the universal invitations of the Bible, such as: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isa. 55:1); “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord” (Isa. 55:7-8); “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call *on* the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21); “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

These scriptures are so clearly and definitely “free grace,” and so utterly devastating to the idea of election, that the predestinarians have come up with the doctrine of “effectual calling,” viz., that God calls everyone but effectually calls only the elect. Such ridiculous nonsense when considering the holiness, mercy, and justice of God! Imagine a mother calling her two sons, John and Jim. But she calls John more loudly, implying that, while she calls Jim and pretends she wants him to come, she in reality does not want him to come. I can imagine such a call in jest, but with the seriousness of damnation and salvation involved, such caprice ascribed to God would make Him the basest hypocrite in His own universe. Just how low will men stoop to support a false, unscriptural doctrine, and maintain their blind allegiance to a man and a creed? This ridiculous argument, this malicious libel against the character of our holy God is a fitting indication of the kind of deluded opponents we face in this controversy. So determined are some religious teachers to maintain their creed, and so emotionally attached are they to the name of a great reformer whom they follow and to the church of their choice, that they would picture God as the basest sadist who ever existed, in that He would deliberately choose to damn to all eternity certain portions of His own created race, for no rhyme or reason, no moral responsibility or guilt or free choice whatsoever, except His own vicious caprice. One could but hate a God who would thus damn one of our sons and save another who was equally guilty or innocent.

But our friends of the other creed will say that there are certain scriptures that definitely teach predestination. Their chief text is: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that

he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Rom. 8:29-30). Let us keep in mind, first of all, that if the scriptures categorically state such a doctrine in their original setting and language, then the Bible flatly contradicts itself, for we have just been considering scriptures that say Christ died for all and invite all to come. Just what does this text mean?

The answer is most interesting and indicates the shallow reasoning of many Christian teachers. The word translated “predestinate” is *pro-or-id-zo*, meaning “to limit in advance, or predetermine.” The background of the word means “to mark out boundaries in advance.” The apostle is here talking about the Church and stating that God foreknew the Church as a group and marked out their spiritual boundaries, viz., “to be conformed to the image of his Son.” He is not speaking of personal election but predestination of character standards of the Church. Deciding to have a Church, the Saviour called the Church to come out from the world and He justified and glorified it. Here is the election of a class or group of individuals. This is the only interpretation consistent with the plain Bible statement of free grace and a universal call, as we have noted. In this scripture the Lord is assuring us that we did not come into being as “the body of Christ” by an accident for which no provision was made, but that, having called us out of the world and made us His own, He makes all things work together for good—a wonderful promise of spiritual security but, in the light of the harmony of scripture, a conditional promise and positively not a statement of individual election or predestination.

Another text used to teach predestination is: “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48). Here the word “ordained” is from the Greek word *tasso*, meaning “to assign or dispose” and a clearer rendering of the word would be “disposes,” reading: “As many as were disposed to eternal life believed.” The English word inclined would be a pretty good synonym, plainly indicating that the ones who were in themselves inclined or disposed toward eternal life believed—our predestinarian friends do not yet have a leg to stand on and they plainly contradict the harmony of scripture.

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of

his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ” (Eph. 1:5-12). Note that the word predestinate is used twice and it is the same word as used in Rom. 8:29-30, and the context brings out more clearly than in Romans that Christ is predestinating character standards and He positively destroys the last vestige of the idea of individual, unconditional election by stating in verse 12, “who first trusted in Christ,” making the whole matter of our fitting into this predestinated pattern dependent upon individual faith.

One would have to do quite a bit of wresting of scripture to get any idea of predestination of individuals here. Because we refer to the original language and find the true meaning, some may accuse us of wresting the scriptures, but we are only rescuing the true scriptures from the wresting they have already had. For we must remember that Augustine and Calvin both antedate the King James translation, and the pagan-inspired doctrine of election and predestination had already colored the thought patterns of the Reformation.

The Meaning of the Word “Eject”

We now consider the word “elect.” “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied” (I Pet. 1:2). Here, again, we see the inspired writer indicating that the Church was no accident, but that God foreknew the Church and her glory, “which things the angels desired to look into” (v. 12). The question is: Did God unconditionally elect some to be saved and some to be lost? If He did, then all of the universal invitations God gives are hypocritical and criminal mockery and the Bible is a strange contradiction, Surely an all-wise God would not contradict himself; therefore, we search into the meaning of the word “elect.”

This word with its variations—elected, election, and elect’s—is used twenty-four times in the New Testament, King James Version, and the basic word four times in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word translated “elect” is *bawkhar*, from the base *bawkhar*, meaning “acceptable, appoint, choose, excellent, join,

require,” from, the root term meaning “to try.” The Greek word is *ek-lek-tos*, from *ek-leg-om-ahee*, meaning “to make choice, choose out from,” from the prefix *ek*, meaning “out” or “out from,” and *leg-o*, the primitive meaning of which is “to lay forth figuratively, to relate, usually of systematic or set discourse,” evidently carrying the thought of naming or listing the Church as Christ’s own after they had received the call rather than from all eternity appointing them to be saved. Light is further found in the word in the Greek translated “church,” *ek-klay-see-ah*, from the prefix *ek* and *kal-eh,-o*, meaning “to call; properly, to call aloud, to call forth.” The word is akin to the base of *kel-yoo-o*, from *kelo*, meaning “to urge on, hail, to incite by word, order, bid, command.”

Hence we get the plan of God. He calls us in a universal call, seeks to incite us by His Word to come to Him; and when we come, we become His called-out ones and are recorded as God’s elect and objects of His special, loving care and keeping. God, foreseeing the Church as a class, foreordained, predestinated, and elected us as a class, not as individuals arbitrarily chosen from all eternity, but individuals who of our own free will and choice yielded to the wooing of His Spirit and believed on Him to the saving of our souls and thus became members of God’s elect. This interpretation is completely in harmony with the basic meaning of these original words translated “elect,” “predestinate,” and “ordain” and fits into the blessed harmony of scripture and does not make God the Author of our damnation with no personal guilt or rejection on our part.

This interpretation is upheld by all the Bible invitations to salvation, and God’s wonderful offer of free grace to all who would come and believe. It harmonizes with the Great Commission to preach the gospel to every creature. It gives meaning to evangelism and missionary work. It holds out hope of salvation to all and makes the gospel “good news.” It in no way violates the idea of God’s offer and gift of grace, unmerited favor, to lost humanity. There is no thought of salvation by works involved here, as the opponents of Arminianism affirm; for repentance and faith are not good works, but rather soul adjustment to God’s plan and will, and cannot be accomplished without the help of the Holy Spirit. For “no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” (John 6:44).

This view finally makes our election conditioned upon our own freewill choice. There is a clearly conditional scripture in relation to election found in II Pet. 1:10, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” This is a plain,

categorical statement and requires no interpreting and forever blasts all idea of unconditional election. Verse 11, “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” makes our giving diligence to make our calling and election sure a condition of our entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In view of these plain scriptures and the sound interpretation of the original words, it is high time all Protestantism came out of the pagan-colored, Dark Ages, Roman Catholic predestinarian doctrine of Calvin and Augustine, and back to the spirit and teaching of free grace of the Church full of the Holy Spirit fresh from Pentecost and before her corruption and descent into the Dark Ages. It is time to stop libeling God as the Author of damnation of a helpless part of the human race, making Him a cruel dictator that would make Stalin and Hitler mere pikers in comparison, and making him guilty of the basest injustice of which the world has ever heard. God save us from such error, which is not taught in the Scriptures, unless they are colored by Augustine’s base paganism dragged into the Church after she had backslidden from her original purity. God in mercy has blessed and saved millions of people in spite of this horrible interpretation of His Word, but how much more could He work if all Protestantism would come all the way out of pagan Catholicism and get back to the Word in its purity and the power of Pentecost!

SCRIPTURES THAT CLEARLY CONTRADICT UNCONDITIONAL SECURITY

In our study thus far we have carefully considered those wonderful Bible promises of the spiritual security of believers and rejoiced in their depth and assurance they carry to our souls. Probably we should all preach more real security. We have also searched the scriptures commonly used to prove unconditional security. But, search as we may, we have not found one clear, categorical statement that once a person is saved he can never be lost. So careful has our search been that we dare make the positive statement that no such categorical statement can be found in the Bible. We have also noted a large group of scriptures that state a condition of final perseverance. We have considered the pungent warnings of the Bible against falling away from God with the plain statements of the danger of being eternally lost if we fall away. We have also seen that the doctrine of election is not taught in the Bible. But from church history we learn that Augustine is the first one to teach either election or unconditional security, and that this teaching of Augustine evidently colored the

thinking of much of the early Reformation. The case for “*free grace*” and “conditional security” is made beyond all power of contradiction, but there is still more evidence to present. We will now give attention to a group of scriptures which even more clearly contradict the doctrine of unconditional security.

Let us start with a prophecy of latter-day apostasy. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth”(I Tim. 4:1-3). Doubtless those who believe in unconditional security will try to prove that any who thus depart from the faith were never saved. This cannot be proved. At least they had faith to depart from and they had given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, which surely indicates being wooed or drawn away from the Lord. The third verse, incidentally, is a very severe condemnation of Catholicism with its meatless days and seasons and enforced celibacy of priesthood and nuns, and also of any non-meat-eating sects.

Paul’s exhortation to Timothy is a very definite proof of the danger of falling away and making shipwreck of faith. “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme” (I Tim. 1:18-20). It might be argued that these who thus made shipwreck of their faith had not been saved, but let us note that Timothy was warned of this danger, implying the possibility that he could do the same. Then others will contend that making shipwreck of *one’s* faith does not involve the loss of the soul. Shipwrecked faith is surely not saving faith, and we have plainly seen that the Greek tenses clearly indicate that faith must be continued. If one had no doctrinal coloring of eternal security, the normal understanding of such a strong statement would be the implied danger of losing our souls. If there were definite categorical statements in the Scriptures that once a soul is saved it is impossible for that soul *to be lost*, then this text might be colored to harmonize with a definitely stated doctrine, but no such statement exists.

A still stronger denial of unconditional security is, “But the younger widows

refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan” (I Tim. 5:11-15). Here the young widows have waxed wanton against Christ, having damnation because they have cast off their *first* faith. It would be difficult to make this text mean these were never saved.

Turn now to some much-disputed scriptures. “Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul” (Ezek. 3:20-21). “Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall *not* deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live: if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live” (Ezek. 33:12-16).

Those who would contend for unconditional security try to escape the force of this scripture by saying this refers to the righteousness of the law. They overlook the fact that the moral law is under consideration here and a general principle is being taught that holds good in every generation and dispensation. There is no accumulation of righteousness that can offset wrongdoing later. Here the defender of his false faith will contend that the righteousness of Christ is imputed for our unrighteousness—past, present, and future. This is the antinomianism the Nicolaitans believed and practiced, even *to* the extent that

they could indulge in the most base immoral practices, such as the community of women, and consider themselves guiltless; and God said He hated their deeds. Look carefully at these scriptures. The wicked and righteous are compared. If the wicked turn from his wickedness, he shall *live*; if he does not turn, he shall *die*. Likewise if the righteous turn from his righteousness and commit sin, he shall die. The prophet warned the righteous that he sin not; and if he doth not sin, he shall *live*.

But those contending for unconditional security tell us that a righteous man or a saved man can go on sinning and live. Is the liberty of the gospel a license to sin? Are we permitted under the New Testament to live on a lower moral and spiritual plane than under the law? God save us from such deception, handed down to us by Augustine, Roman Catholicism, the Dark Ages, Calvin, and Calvinistic teachers. Let us grow up spiritually and get back to the teaching of the Bible and the Early Church before her corruption, and seek and find *real salvation from sin*, instead of intellectual salvation in sin.

Let us now cross the Testament lines and note a similar scripture. “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (I Cor. 10:1-12).

There are some key texts in this lesson that clearly present the argument for the danger of falling away and losing our souls. First, these Old Testament people had the symbol of New Testament baptism, ate “spiritual meat . . . drank of that spiritual Rock . . . and that Rock was Christ.” Their disobediences brought serious consequences, surely typical of being eternally lost. Verse 6 says

they were examples, to the end that we should not lust after evil things; and verse 11 says that they were ensamples, and “they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” No one but those whose thinking is highly colored by false teaching would ever conceive of any other meaning than that there is danger of falling away from Christ and being lost.

We follow through now with two outstanding portions of scripture which flatly and pungently contradict unconditional security. The opponents of free grace and conditional security say that they are always confronted with chapters 6 and 10 of Hebrews. It is only natural that they should be thus confronted, for here are two very plain passages of scripture that clearly contradict the doctrine of unconditional security. They are so plain that anyone who reads them without doctrinal coloring just automatically takes them as a pungent warning against backsliding and losing one’s soul. One has to be *taught* otherwise. As one writer said, “Calvinism must be *taught*.” No one naturally believes that we are unconditionally secure. The new convert just automatically feels he must walk carefully before the Lord. “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 6: 4-6). The whole argument for and against unconditional security from Heb. 6:4-6 hinges on whether the ones warned thus are saved people or not. Let us see.

These people were “once enlightened,” “have tasted of the heavenly gift,” been “made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” “tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.” It seems to me that these are pretty strong statements to be referred to those who have never been saved. Calvinists will argue that enlightenment is only intellectual, tasting is not eating, partaking of the Holy Ghost is only coming under the conviction of the Holy Ghost, tasting of the Word is just Bible study, and tasting of the powers of the world to come is only witnessing the miracle-working powers of God. What a pitiful attempt to discredit the clear teaching of the Word of God to bolster up an unbiblical theory! To crucify the Son of God afresh indicates a repetition of crucifying the Saviour and a time when they did not crucify Him. It is doubtful if any sinner can put Christ to an open shame, but one who has really been saved and for a time lived a real Christian life can surely crucify Christ afresh and put Him to an

open shame. Then the thought of renewing again to repentance would indicate a previous repentance. A mistranslation of one word in verse 6 has cast many into despair. The word translated “seeing” is correctly translated “while” and throws an entirely different light on the passage.

The thought of impossibility of renewing to repentance might arise from the idea that these were not of the *elect* and hence could not be led to repentance. What utterly ridiculous interpretations are placed on scripture to bolster a creed that it not scriptural! Such interpreters are almost on a par with the lazy housewife who translated that scriptural passage from the words of our Lord to Martha, “One thing is needful,” to mean that only one article of food was needed for a meal. When will people ever come to accept scripture as it is in plain words and stop trying to make it fit their creed?

Another scripture that plainly indicates the danger of backsliding and being eternally lost is: “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:26-31).

The characters in question have just been promised that God will put His laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds, and remember their sins no more. Then after the apostle says, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,” he proceeds to exhort these brethren to “draw near,” “hold fast,” “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works,” and not forsake the assembling of themselves together, and then connects these exhortations to the pungent warning of our lesson with the word “for.” Then in the warning he speaks of “the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified,” being trodden underfoot. Now treading on the Blood of the covenant signifies a covenant’s having been previously made and now being trodden underfoot by those who positively were sanctified by it. Could words be plainer? It is nothing short of sinful stupidity for anyone to attempt to dispute these plain words and their clear meaning. These two passages of scripture in

Hebrews are positively devastating to the whole doctrine of unconditional security. Those who are deluded by this Augustinian, Calvinistic teaching, born in paganism, nurtured in the Dark Ages, and still living to divide and embarrass true Protestantism, will always be confronted by these clear warnings of the danger of backsliding and losing their souls. May God have mercy on those thus deluded.

Continuing our study of scriptures that positively contradict unconditional security, we find: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20). In defense of unconditional security our friends will say that the Lord changes His subject right in the middle of the text, that "let him know" means that the one converting the erring brother must then let him, the converted one, know he must go out after sinners, knowing that he will be saving a soul from death and hiding a multitude of sins. This is a clever dodge of the truth but ridiculous when we see through it. A plain grammatical analysis of the sentence shows that it refers to the one who converts the erring brother. Proof of this is found in the terms "err" and "error." Also if this were a command to tell the converted brother, one of several other Greek words would be more correct usage. Moffatt translates this word "understand." Now on this clear statement of personality indicated note the strong language used. The erring brother is likened to and actually called a sinner, and his soul has been saved from death and his sins covered.

Also devastating to the doctrine of unconditional security is: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (II Pet. 2:20-22). Here the apostle sternly denounces people who have forsaken the right way. He says they promise themselves liberty but are themselves the servants of corruption. Some Bible scholars believe that these were people who had been won over to the antinomianism of the Gnostics and Nicolaitans, who believed that they could practice the most vicious sins with impunity because their sins, past, present, and future, were all forgiven. Some historians say Nicholas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons who had been full of the Holy Ghost and

wisdom, was one of these.

“Promising themselves liberty” sounds like the false liberty of antinomianism, and the false liberty or license of those whom Calvinistic teachers say will go from the laps of harlots and through theater roofs to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Oh, such rot in the name of Christianity! They had been overcome by corruption and brought into bondage. Note that they had escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What severe condemnation is pronounced upon them —“latter end is worse . . . than the beginning. . . . better for them not to have known the way of righteousness . . . the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire”! How can such strong, clear language be ignored? No one would attempt to color such clear teaching but those who are desperate to support a tottering hypothesis and an unbiblical creed.

In passing, let us note briefly the savorless salt. “Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 14:34-35). Salt once had savor, but lost it, and now is not fit for the dunghill, but men cast it out. Not much security there!

Then there is the example of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11. They were loyal enough to accept the principle of community of goods then practiced but, being overcome by covetousness, were hypocritical about it. Peter said they lied to God, and Rev. 21:8 says, “All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.” Kow dare some false teachers say Ananias and Sapphira went to heaven? Because of this punishment of sin “great fear came upon the church” (v.11).

Paul’s tender, parting warning to the elders of the church of Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38) clearly indicates the danger of backsliding. He prophesied that grievous wolves would enter into the flock of God, and also that from within would arise those who would speak perverse things and draw away disciples. That surely looks like converted people being drawn away from salvation. Paul says he warned the Ephesians with tears night and day for three years.

Then Paul’s warning to gentile Christians in Rom. 11:13-24 is another clear warning against backsliding. The burden of the apostle seems *to be* double: first, to warn gentile Christians to be humble and walk carefully; and second, to stir the Jews to come out of their unbelief. He speaks of the Jews as the natural branch being broken off, and then of the gentiles as the wild olive branch grafted

in. He says the Jews were broken off because of unbelief and the gentiles stand by faith, with the implied danger of failing to keep the faith, for the goodness of God would continue to the gentiles only if they continued in this goodness. Paul clearly states, "Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (v. 22). True, this scripture is speaking of Jews and gentiles as classes, but the individual is included, and each individual stands or falls on his own faith.

Space forbids our considering all the scriptures that clearly contradict the doctrine of unconditional security, and we will have to close this part of our study with two more: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5). "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:19). In Rev. 2:5, God is talking to the Ephesian church, who He said had left their first love. He commands them to repent and do their first works, with the threat that if they do not repent and do their first works He will remove their candlestick out of its place. Here are some very delicate distinctions. At just what point in leaving their first love would complete reprobation come and the candlestick, the symbol of their spiritual life and acceptance with God, be removed? But the threat is that it will be removed if they do not repent. That most certainly means taking away our place in God's kingdom here and hereafter. How anyone can still contend for absolute unconditional security in the face of this scripture is beyond me. It looks like terrible spiritual stupidity to me.

And now the final Bible warning against falling away from God and being lost, Rev. 22:19, quoted above. What a fearful warning against anyone destructively criticizing the word of prophecy! God says He will "*take away his part out of the book of life.*" This could not be said of an unsaved man, who never had his name in the book of life, and hence had no part in it. If God will take the name of any man or "his part" out of the book of life, then the whole fabric of unconditional security falls to the ground. One exception would definitely destroy the doctrine; for if *one* is removed from God's book, others can be. May God save us all from being deluded by a false security. How we do thank God for His wonderful keeping power! And it is evident that there are not as many backsliders as would first appear, because many were never really born again; for "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (I John 3:9). How anyone can believe in antinomianian justification and commit sin willfully, and

face this scripture, I do not know. Yes, many profess, but do not possess; but we have seen abundant scripture that plainly states that those who are truly saved can fall away and be lost. All of us have seen people who have truly borne the fruits of the Spirit, and been real Christians, fall away from God and go back into gross sin, and some died that way. God has been faithful to us on this part and given us a number of authentic cases where people did fall away from God and die that way. We will consider some of these actual cases.

SOME SCRIPTURAL INSTANCES OF BACKSLIDING

The first example of falling from a state of spiritual purity was Adam and Eve. They were sinless in the garden, but they broke God's law, fell into sin, died spiritually, became subject to physical and eternal death, and their only hope of salvation from sin and death was the atonement of Christ. If they could fall from such a state of spiritual innocence and purity in such wonderful surroundings, then a born-again Christian can fall. Remember, we have searched diligently and found no definite statement from the Word that says he cannot.

Next we consider King Saul. I Samuel 10—16 describes a man with a wonderful experience and opportunity but whose life ended in tragedy both physically and spiritually. He was humble in the beginning and accepted his calling from God with deep humility. In I Sam. 10:9 we are told, "God gave him another heart"; and in verse 10 we are told that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he prophesied among the prophets. In verses 26 and 27 of the same chapter we are told that "there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched." "But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace. He had a new heart; the Spirit came on him; he had recognition of the prophets; he drew to him men whose hearts God had touched; he had the opposition of the wicked; and he manifested a proper spirit under this persecution—all clear signs of a real experience with the Lord. The teaching that no one under Old Testament law had a heart experience with God is false. Saul had the help of God for a time as he fought the enemies of Israel, and won signal victories.

Then we see him begin to slip spiritually, and then outwardly in his acts as king. First, he committed the sin of presumption in offering a burnt offering, which only priests should offer. Then he laid unjust regulations on Israel, saying, "Until I am avenged of mine enemies." This was the sin of vainglory. Then he plainly disobeyed and spared King Agag, and Samuel said Saul was rejected. Samuel mourned over Saul's downfall, and the Lord repented that He had made

Saul king over Israel. We are told, “The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him” (I Sam. 16:14). His downfall was rapid with the successive steps of envy and hatred for David, counseling with the witch of Endor, and finally, death by suicide. How could anyone doubt that Saul was a truly saved man and that he fell from grace and was lost?

Now look at Judas. He was chosen as a disciple and given with others “power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal ... all manner of disease” (Matt. 10:1). In Matt. 10:8 the disciples were all told, “Freely ye have received, freely give.” But Judas soon gave evidence of falling away, and Jesus said in John 6:64 that Judas did not believe, and in verse 70 that he was a devil. Then on the night of the betrayal, we are told, the devil entered into Judas, which is evidence that up to that time he was not devil-possessed. He betrayed his Lord and died a suicide. In Acts 1:25 we are told that “Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.” If he fell by transgression, then he fell from grace and most certainly was lost.

Time would forbid the mention of Hymenaeus and Alexander and Demas and many instances of other people falling from grace. Many and clever arguments are offered by those who would try to support the unconditional security theory. But mere human arguments are no substitute for plain scripture, and we have seen many scriptures that have definitely contradicted this doctrine, and not one definite categorical statement in scripture that declares it. No such scriptural statement exists.

ONCE A SON ALWAYS A SON

But those who are determined not to give up a pet theory, and a very comfortable doctrine for those who would hope to keep justified while living in willful sin, will say, “When one is born of God he becomes a son of God and *once a son always a son.*” What is the real truth here?

First let us remember that we are talking about two different and distinct kinds of births. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). Physical birth is accomplished by one being separated from his mother. Spiritual birth is obtained by a spiritual union with Christ. Physical birth cannot be undone because the union cannot be reestablished, but spiritual birth can be undone by sin that separates us from God. “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2). We are also taught that a son can die. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not

bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezek. 18:20). Also let us remember that, if the spiritual sonship status cannot be changed, then we are hopeless, for we are plainly told that sinners are sons of the devil (John 8:44 and I John 3:8). If sin made us children of the devil, and salvation from sin made us sons of God, then sin can again make us sons of the devil. We must not forget that spiritual life or spiritual death depends upon our relationship to sin. If we sin we are of the devil. Jesus came to save us from our sins. “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). Salvation from sin constitutes spiritual sonship; hence we must abide in a state of salvation from sin to become and continue to be sons of God. This “once a son always a son” is merely a human argument and not scriptural. Let us abide by the plain teaching of scripture.

SOME PERTINENT CONCLUSIONS

We have faithfully examined the great bulk of scripture bearing in any way upon spiritual security. Probably we have not considered all the scriptures sometimes used in debating this point but nearly all at least—and the main ones. In our study we have not been able to find one categorical statement that, once a soul is saved, he is forever and eternally secure. In Christian courtesy and the interest of truth, we humbly challenge anyone to produce such a categorical statement from the Bible.

We have found some wonderful promises of spiritual security for true believers, and we rejoice in the keeping power of our Lord and these wonderful promises God has made to His children. These great promises of spiritual security often plainly stated a condition to this keeping power, and in other places clearly implied such a condition, but never once did they state an unconditional promise of eternal security.

In our study of those writings, defining the doctrine of unconditional security we have found a lot of doctrinal coloring applied to these wonderful security *texts*. A pagan, Augustinian, Dark Age concept has been set up and scriptures have often been wrested to prove this concept. We have come through this study of both sides of this doctrinal issue with some very deeply settled convictions.

First: All the moral instincts of a humble follower of Christ, who has not been taught the doctrines of Calvinism, lead to the feeling of moral obligation, of careful obedience and continued saving faith as the price of real security. In

other words, Calvinism *must be taught*.

Second: Having found no teaching of election or unconditional security in scripture or in the Early Church for four centuries after Christ, we are convinced that it is a pagan-inspired, Dark Age doctrine, from which all Protestants should flee. We are convinced that Wesleyan Arminianism is the true doctrine of the Bible and the Church from Pentecost to the Dark Ages, and is the Protestant Reformation grown to full stature, while Calvinism is the Reformation in its infancy with much yet to be desired.

Third: We have nothing but the deepest respect and highest confidence in the sincerity of Augustine and Calvin, both of whom we believe were saved men; but we see Augustine as a great intellectual and not a sound theologian to be followed; and we see Calvin also as a great intellectual, hottempered and exceedingly dogmatic and assertive, just a short step out of Roman Catholic darkness, highly temperamental and not a mature theologian we would want to follow. We see Arminius, a good man, deserving the highest respect for his sincerity, a good preacher and teacher, who, in preparing to write in defense of Calvinistic decrees of the time, and studying the Scriptures with real intellectual honesty, came to see the Bible teaching of free grace and conditional security. For his stand he suffered the bitterest persecution from the dogmatic theologians of the day and died young, evidently with a breaking heart under pressure of this persecution. His was the first step away from the Augustinian teaching but still needing clarification. In John Wesley and his coworkers we see men with a Protestant background, deep Bible scholars and strong intellectuals, but with the poise of the Spirit-filled life they found and taught. They were the mature and seasoned theologians of the Protestant Reformation, able to glean from the early history of Protestantism greater light and maturer judgment, and thus were able to bring the Reformation to full stature. If all Protestantism could have laid aside its prejudices and followed in the leadership of these maturer theologians, we would have a united Protestantism under the sound teachings of the Early Church and the Bible. We would have seen a Spirit-filled Church imbued with power to “spread scriptural holiness in these lands”—yea, throughout the world.

Fourth: We have become fully convinced by our study that the unscriptural teaching of election leads to fatalism and is a strong deterrent to New Testament evangelism as exemplified by the Early Church; that the teaching of unconditional security hinders continuation of saving faith and leads to carelessness in Christian living; and that the teaching of antinomian justification encourages sin in believers and offers a false hope to transgressors.

Fifth: We rejoice that the doctrine of conditional security, in the light of the many glorious promises for the security of believers, offers all the security we need and all a true Christian would ever ask.

Sixth: We cannot escape the logical conclusion that, should we Wesleyan Arminians be wrong, we would still be covered by unconditional security; while if we are right, as the Scriptures so conclusively prove, then our Calvinistic friends are trusting in a false hope and are teachers of a most dangerous delusion.

Finally: There is nothing to be gained by teaching unconditional security, while teaching conditional security stimulates carefulness and holy zeal in believers and is more calculated to promote deep spiritual life. Therefore the Calvinist would lose nothing by renouncing his doctrine and gain much in the transition.

O brethren, of Calvinism, grow up with the Reformation and come all the way out the Dark Ages and Augustinian Catholicism and become real, New Testament Christians!

IV

Bible Holiness or Entire Sanctification

(Meeting Place Number Three)

We come now to the third and last meeting place of these two “creeds,” which is “Bible holiness or entire sanctification.” Here again the division varies and many different attitudes are to be found *on* either side of this division. Calvin said that sanctification was just getting better and better, or growing in grace, thus denying all thought of a cleansing, sanctifying work of God beyond conversion. One wellknown writer expressed his criticism in the book *Holiness, the False and the True*, in which he said that holiness was a “false cult,” not realizing that his doctrine of the two natures (sin in the flesh) and antinomian justification could be definitely traced back to pagan philosophy and is really the “false cult.” Another says, “Holiness, I have no patience with it,” not realizing that “God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us the Holy Spirit” (I Thess. 4:7-8).

Others believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit after conversion for power for service but not for the cleansing of the heart. Still others emphasize the gifts of the Spirit and teach that speaking in tongues is the necessary evidence of the baptism of the Spirit. Yet others believe in regeneration, sanctification, and the baptism of fire as a third work of grace. Then there are those, in ever-increasing numbers on the Calvinistic side, who are coming to accept the second crisis of Christian life in the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and here the great divide is almost obliterated. Because of this confusion of voices, and some unfortunate fanatical teachings with reference to holiness or sanctification, a great multitude of people close their hearts to any consideration of the subject. They forget that where there are counterfeits there is sure to be a real. Space will forbid an extensive study, so we will only try to clear away the debris and seek a clear, scriptural understanding of this Bible doctrine. It is not what men think but what God says that concerns us.

Perhaps we had best begin our study of this meeting place with some clear definitions. This is especially necessary because feelings run high at this meeting point and prejudice is often bitter, and neither prejudice nor bitterness can help

rational judgment. The English word sanctify comes from the combination of the Latin word *sanctus*, meaning “holy or sacred,” and the word *facere*, meaning “to make”; hence sanctify means “to make holy.” The Greek word *hag-ee-ad-zo*, from which we get the word sanctify, means “to make holy, to purify or consecrate.” *Webster’s International Dictionary* says sanctify means “to make sacred or holy; to set apart to a sacred office; to make free from sin; to cleanse from moral corruption and pollution; to purify;” and sanctification is defined as “the act or process of God’s grace, by which the affections of men are purified or alienated from sin, and exalted to a supreme love to God and righteousness; also the state of being thus purified.” Funk and Wagnall’s *College Dictionary* defines the word sanctify as “to make holy; purify, as from sin; to set apart as holy, or for holy purposes; consecrate.” Sanctification is defined as “the work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer is freed from sin and exalted to holiness of life.” Holiness is defined as “completeness of moral and spiritual purity.” Others define holiness as “entire moral goodness to the exclusion of all moral evil.” Thank God for the dictionaries, for they often preach a good gospel.

The Bible says so much about holiness and sanctification that it cannot be safely ignored. We are commanded to be holy. We are called to holiness. God wills our sanctification and without holiness “no man shall see the Lord.” In the Old Testament we find the word sanctify or sanctified, from the Hebrew word *kawdash*, used 10 times; and in the New Testament the words sanctify, sanctified, sanctifieth, and sanctification, from the base word *hag-ee-ad~zo*, used 31 times. In the Old Testament we find the word holiness, from the Hebrew word *ko-desh*, used 30 times; and in the New Testament the word holiness, 13 times, 9 times of which the word is from Greek base *hag-ee-ad-zo*, and the other 4 occurrences of the word are from other Greek words meaning “pious, devout, godly or holy by intrinsic or divine character.” The use of these words varies greatly. Many times they are not applied to persons, and fewer times directly to the work of making the soul pure; but we must keep in mind that the great truths of cleansing and consecrating prevail whether speaking of things or of persons,

One very hostile writer against the Wesleyan Arminian interpretation of sanctification and holiness calls attention to twelve different uses of the word sanctification that do not and cannot apply directly to the purifying of the soul. We would answer that intelligent teachers of Bible holiness or sanctification knew of these twelve uses of the word, and of many more uses of it, centuries before he was ever heard of, and he has not offered us any new thing. The one lack in his shallow reasoning is the fact that throughout all these various uses of

these important words there runs the thought of moral or ceremonial purity and dedication to holy purposes, and these various applications of these words strengthen rather than weaken their meaning. He also forgets that in most of the cases where these words are applied to hallowed places or things they are speaking of places and things typical of New Testament sanctification of individuals. Just how stupid can some good people be in their bitter opposition to God's full plan of salvation?

If this chapter constituted this entire book, it would be a pleasure to go into a very thorough and all-inclusive study of all scripture bearing on this subject, the history of the teaching from Pentecost to today, and the experiential power and glory of this plan of full salvation. But space forbids such an exhaustive study. We will need to confine our thinking to a brief evaluation of the doctrinal positions of the two creeds, and the controversial issues we discover at this meeting place, and just what the Bible does teach on the subject of holiness and sanctification. Even this will be a large effort crowded into small limitations.

What are the common doctrinal positions of these two creeds? Individual views of doctrine vary but the general attitude of Calvinists is pretty well included in Calvin's definition of sanctification, which amounts to growth in grace and consecration. They recognize no crisis experience beyond conversion. They see no baptism of the Holy Spirit beyond the spiritual birth. They recognize no heart cleansing beyond regeneration, more than that of personal victories of daily walking with God; and many do not even go that far, but are content to sacrifice personal holiness in their antinomian imputation of the righteousness of Christ as a cloak to cover their own daily sinning. Theirs is largely a negative attitude. They recognize the existence of the carnal nature in the heart but see no remedy for it this side of death.

The Wesleyan Arminians believe that in the spiritual birth they have salvation from the habits and practices of sin, wrought in the heart by the life-giving power of Christ. They believe that this great crisis experience deals effectively with the sin of practice in the born again Christian. They believe with the Calvinist that the carnal nature still exists in the very nature of man after conversion, but that God has a deeper cleansing that purifies the soul from the nature sin in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, received as a definite second crisis subsequent to regeneration. They do not believe that this wonderful work in the heart brings absolute perfection, or perfection of service, but they do believe in Christian perfection or heart perfection in love. There is so much difference in these two doctrinal viewpoints that both cannot be right. What say the

Scriptures?

THE SCRIPTURES OFFER ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION ONLY TO BELIEVERS

Let us take the First Epistle to the Thessalonians as our first example. We are told that the Thessalonian Christians had “work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope” (1:3). In verse 4, they were the elect of God, indicating that they had given evidence of clear justification, adoption, and the witness of the Spirit, which constitute the basis of election, according to the election of grace. In verse 5 we see that the gospel had come to them “in power, and in the Holy Ghost.” Verse 6 says they became followers of Paul and of the Lord, “having received the word in much affliction, with joy in the Holy Ghost.” Paul says they “were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia” (v. 7), and their faith was spread abroad. They had “turned from idols to serve the living and true God” (v. 9). Paul also says they “became followers of the churches” (2:14); and in verse 20 he tells us they were his “glory and joy.” None but the genuine, born-again believers could measure up to this description.

But with all this evidence of clear cut conversion, Paul was night and day praying that he might see their faces and perfect that which was lacking in their faith (I Thess. 3:19). In verse 13 he desires that the Lord establish their hearts unblameable in holiness. Then we find Paul saying, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification” (I Thess. 4:3); and in verse 7, they are called unto holiness. Paul then climaxes his exhortations to sanctification, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (I Thess. 5:23-24). Now just a few observations from this last reference. The Greek verb “sanctify” is here used in the aorist tense, denoting an instantaneous or crisis experience. If sanctification were what Calvin believed it was, growth in grace, or “getting better and better,” this word would have been in the imperfect tense, denoting a gradual or continued action. Also, it was to be a work of God, not man’s effort in growing in grace, and it was to “preserve” them “blameless.” Can anyone doubt that this sanctification was for believers in view of these plain scripture references?

It will be argued by some that sanctification is not exclusively for believers, because there are places where the term is applied to people like the Corinthians who were also carnal. Here is a fine distinction we must not overlook. Sanctification in full Latin meaning is a broad term, and the Greek word *hag-ee-ad-zo* carries a very broad meaning and indicates any phase of the process of

making men pure or holy, so that, rightly speaking, sanctification begins in regeneration. In fact, any phase of the process of making men pure or holy is rightly called sanctification. This is clearly supported by the Greek word *hag-ee-os-mon* in Heb. 12:14, which denotes the process of holiness or sanctification in distinction from the word of sanctification here denoted by the verb in the aorist tense in I Thess. 5:23. But we must remember the Thessalonians are to be “sanctified wholly,” further denoting the partial or initial sanctification of believers but definitely indicating a crisis salvation! There is initial sanctification in regeneration or the new birth, entire or “wholly” sanctification in this crisis sanctification, and then in Heb. 12:14 there is the process of holiness or sanctification to follow as a course of life which covers the whole ground of Christian life from initial sanctification through crisis sanctification and on through the walk of sanctification or holiness to the end of life. In John 1:7 is one of those all-inclusive scriptures describing the holiness life. “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” O my brother Calvinist, look what you are missing if your faith does not comprehend this “initial, crisis, process” sanctification or holiness! Praise the Lord! (Some may question my apparent juggling of the words “holiness” and “sanctification.” Please go back to the English definition of the word sanctification or sanctify and the Greek word *hag-ee-ad-zo* and note the interchangeable use of “holiness” and “sanctification.”)

Now just a few more scriptures where sanctification is definitely offered to believers. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might *present* it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:25-27). Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it. The Church is the “called-out ones,” who could be no less than born-again believers, and Christ gave himself for their sanctification.

Still another clear scripture on this point is our Lord’s prayer (John 17). Note that the disciples had been given to Christ by the Father, He had kept them with the exception of Judas, they were not of the world, and He prays for their sanctification. Then He prays, not for them alone, “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” In verse 19 we have another instance of the breadth of the word sanctify. “And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they

also might be sanctified through the truth.” Keep in mind that “sanctify” means to purify and consecrate, the two essential elements of making any person or thing holy. Jesus had no moral impurity to be cleansed, but He did set himself apart as a Sin Offering for our sanctification. We, in turn, have moral impurity, so we need both consecration and cleansing. This wonderful word covers both Christ and us.

Finally, “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” (Heb. 13:12-13). Paul is here describing Jesus as the Sin Offering, likening Him to the refuse of the offering which was burned outside the camp, and saying that He went without the camp as a type of our sinful pollution and thus purchased sanctification for “the people.” The people involved in the Levitical sin offering were not unbelievers but believing Hebrews. Dear reader, is your soul not blessed as we study together these wonderful passages of scripture? With reluctance we leave this holy ground and pass on to our next proposition.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PROMISED ONLY TO BELIEVERS

Our first reference is often subject to controversy, but let us see. In the second chapter of Acts, the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples. They were definitely believers. Christ had been careful to restore every one to faith before He ascended to the Father. Those who are looking for a loophole will call to attention Luke 22:32, where Jesus said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” We have only to note that Jesus is telling Peter of his coming sifting by Satan, evidently his “betrayal” of his Lord. But Jesus said He had prayed that Peter’s faith fail not, proving that he already had faith which could fail. Then the word “converted” is from the Greek word meaning “turned again.” Instead of proving that Peter and the disciples were unbelievers and unconverted, this scripture is a positive proof text that he was already a child of God, as were the others whom Christ called brethren. Remember that the disciples were all with one accord in one place on the Day of Pentecost and waiting for “the promise of the Father,” which is a beautiful description of humble, obedient, united believers ready for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost rings clear on this proposition. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are

afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38-39). Notice that repentance and Christian baptism and the remission of sins must precede the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the promise is to as many as the Lord shall call. Again the Holy Ghost baptism is for the “called-out” ones.

Now turn to Acts 19. Paul found some disciples of John who had John’s baptism of repentance. He asked if they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed. He preached Christ to them and they received Christian baptism, and then he laid his hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost.

These are instances enough to prove that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is only for the believers, especially when there is no statement or instance in scripture that contradicts this proposition.

SINCE ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION AND THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST ARE ONLY FOR BELIEVERS, THEN BOTH ARE SUBSEQUENT TO THE NEW BIRTH.

The logical question then is, Are these different or identical crisis experiences? “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (II Thess. 2:13). Sanctification then is through the Spirit and belief in the truth, hence through faith. I Pet. 1:2 also supports this truth: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit.” Predestinarians might seize on the words “chosen” and “elect” to support their theory. But we have already seen that God calls everyone and those who accept the call become His elect, and that God, foreknowing the Church, predestinated the Church as a class to be conformed to the image of Christ and He predestinated them to sanctification of the Spirit. Praise the Lord for this predestination to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which should sweep away the last doubt that every believer can have the baptism of the Holy Spirit and that this baptism constitutes the crisis experience of sanctification!

FINALLY, ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION OR THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST IS A CLEANSING, SOUL-PURIFYING WORK.

“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:8-9). Peter is here comparing the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon Jews at Pentecost and upon gentiles, and he uses the Greek word *kath-ar-id-zo*, meaning “to cleanse, make clean, purge, purify.”

It is a very strong term and used very frequently in scripture. Christ gave himself to sanctify and cleanse the Church (Eph. 5:26). We remember that *hag-ee-ad-zo* is a broad term and includes consecration and cleansing. Hence the Lord inserted the other and stronger term, *kath-ar-id-zo*, to denote entire cleansing and make sanctification more than merely consecration. In the first edition of our latest American version of the Bible, the translators had not done that. But able scholars of Wesleyan Arminian faith protested on the basis that *hag-ee-ad-zo* means “to make holy” and includes cleansing as well as consecration, and the word was restored to its correct translation, “sanctify.” Oh, how very prone men are to attempt to escape from the necessity of heart purity! This word *kath-ar-id-zo* is found in I John 1:7 and 9, “cleanseth us from all sin,” “cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

The above very clear scripture declarations for heart cleansing in the baptism of the Holy Ghost are irrefutable. That a definite cleansing work is wrought by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer cannot be denied. But those who would contend for sin (a most foolish contention) would seek to split theological hairs and contend for terms in an attempt to deny that this cleansing means a cleansing from inbred sin, the carnal nature, or human depravity. Those who would still contend for the doctrine of “the two natures” or sin in the physical body will strenuously argue that such a cleansing from inherited sin or human depravity cannot be had. If the Bible taught that sin was in the physical body, then their contention would be correct, but not one scripture can be found to support such an idea. Let the heathen have their vile doctrine of sin in the human body, but Christianity does not teach any such thing. Bible psychology locates original sin in the human spirit, not the inanimate body. The Old Testament idea of human depravity is described by the Hebrew word *aw-vone*, meaning “perversity or something perverted.” The most able Bible psychologists say it is a perversion of the drives of life in the subconscious mind and deeper than the will. Sin has perverted or warped our human nature as a race and we all inherit this perverseness or bent to sinning. At conversion, through regeneration, a new life is imparted to the soul, our sins are forgiven, we are justified, and given the witness of the Spirit. Obviously this work of regeneration is not a work of nature cleansing; hence we have the Spirit of Christ but we also have the carnal spirit.

In James we have the term “double minded” (1:8; 4:8). The Greek word here is *dip-soo-khos*, meaning “two-spirited.” Now look at Jas. 4:8, “Cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” The word “cleanse” here is *had-niz-zo*, meaning “to make clean, sanctify, purify,” from the

basic *hag-nos*, meaning “clean, innocent, perfect, chaste, pure”; and this word roots back in the word *hag-ee-os*, meaning “sacred, pure, holy, saint.” All of these words are related closely to the word *hag-ee-ad-zo*, meaning “to make holy or sanctify.”

O brethren of opposite creed, please do not dodge this clear Bible teaching of heart cleansing in the Holy Spirit! What need we say more than these plain scriptures? God wills the sanctification of believers. Sanctification means to make holy, cleanse, consecrate, and purify. The Greek word *kath-ar-id-zo*, meaning to “cleanse, purge, or purify,” is added to fortify this wonderful truth that we can have our hearts made clean. And Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” If you want to see God, be sure to seek and find a clean heart!

This two-crisis nature of salvation is clearly supported by a number of texts. There is life, and abundant life—“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). And then there is love, and perfect love—“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. . . . perfect love casteth out fear” (I John 4: 17-18). Still there is fruit, and more fruit—“Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit” (John 15:1). The word translated “purgeth” is *kath-ah-ee-ro*, meaning “to prune or to cleanse,” and is closely related to our word *kath-ar-id-zo*.

One last little argument often presented against the two-crisis work of the Holy Ghost is that the Holy Spirit is a Person and cannot be divided; and that when we get Him in conversion, that is it—period. The answer is simple and irrefutable. When we are regenerated or born again, we get the “birth” of the Spirit; when we are sanctified, we get the “baptism” of the Spirit—two distinct office works of the Spirit. When we get saved, we are saved from the sin of practice. When we are sanctified, we are cleansed from the sin of nature.

Finally, Christian testimony supports the two-crisis doctrine of full salvation. In the Early Church before the Dark Ages it seems the general practice was that converts were given water baptism and then the bishop or presiding minister laid his hands on them and, as was said, sealed them with the Holy Ghost. The Early Church expected a baptism of the Holy Spirit upon believers.

In a book bearing a 1911 copyright, *Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians*, the author gives a list of outstanding Christians from Old Testament

saints and New Testament characters, and from Savonarola to past century soul winners, that reads like a “Who’s Who of God’s Children” of all ages; and almost without an exception they testify to a second crisis experience in their lives. Denominational lines and Calvinist Arminian boundaries have been crossed and recrossed, and Christians of all shades of doctrine have been born again and filled with the Spirit. Terminologies have greatly varied but essential qualities of experience strangely conformed to a uniform pattern.

Among those with glowing testimonies of the second crisis, we see Moody with his baptism of the Holy Ghost some years after his conversion. We see Finney saved in the morning and filled with the Spirit that night. We see Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a definite second-blessing saint; and Francis Willard, founder of the W.C.T.U., a sanctified Methodist. We see J. Wilbur Chapman, known as the sanctified Presbyterian; and General William Booth and his wife, Catherine, founders of the Salvation Army, definitely testifying to second-blessing holiness or entire sanctification. The list is too long to continue, but the inference is plain: Wesley an Arminian teaching on holiness or entire sanctification is no product of a few small “latter day” sects but is a doctrine as true as the Word of God, as high as a holy heaven, and as broad as the true Church under the power of Pentecost.

Of late it has been our joy to see many outstanding preachers, laymen, and leaders of definite Calvinistic background come definitely over to a second-crisis experience. And why should it not be so? Why should the followers of Calvin, who was a good man, far beyond his time, but was born too soon, and had too few helpful contemporaries and scarcely any Protestant precedents to guide him out of the darkness of Romanism—why, may I ask, should these followers, in the blazing light of our day, burn incense to Calvin and dig their heels into the sand and stop where he stopped? Oh, for a Holy Ghost baptism on all Protestantism that would rebuke theological hairsplitting, consume modernism and neoorthodoxy, burn down creedal fences, and melt all Protestantism to penitence and a trip to the Upper Room for a mighty Pentecost! I verily believe that the one greatest movement that would bring such a veritable Pentecost would be that our Brethren of Calvinism come to see what they are missing of our Lord’s promised power and accept Bible holiness and entire sanctification as the Bible teaches it, as the Early Church experienced it, and as Wesleyan Arminianism restored it to the Church, struggling to shake off the filth of the Dark Ages and Romanism.

One recently said, “Methodism [meaning all who hold Methodistic doctrines

or Wesleyan Arminianism] will never be revived because we have sinned against so much light; but God is trying to get to the Calvinists in our day.” Some of us are trembling when we see so many who have had the blazing light of Wesleyan Arminianism settling down in smug complacency, allowing themselves to grow cold and so utterly failing to demonstrate the glory they might have, and we wonder if the revivals we are seeing may not be God’s great effort to revive the Calvinists and bring them all the way over to the power of a mighty Pentecost. O brethren of Calvinism, this is your day, if you will just anoint your eyes with eye salve to clear away the smoke of doctrinal coloring and fully accept true Bible holiness! Whether you join our churches or shout our creed is of less concern to us than that you get the spirit, power, and truth of Wesleyan Arminianism. *Come, brethren, give us your hand in love and understanding at this third place “where two creeds meet.”*

V

Conclusion

We have taken an extended walk along the borders “where two creeds meet.” We hope, dear reader, that you have enjoyed the journey as much as we have. These many years of study, as time would permit, counseling preachers, teachers, and Bible scholars, listening to messages, searching everywhere for added light and understanding, wading through volumes of bibliography, representing both creeds, and searching deeply into the Scriptures for every nugget of truth we could find on these great themes, have greatly enriched our own souls. God grant that this inspiration may be transmitted through these pages to all who read.

We have been deeply conscious of a great, deep, abiding love in our hearts for all our brethren in Christ of both creeds as we have written. If we have written frankly and plainly, we have done so in love and, we honestly believe we can say, without name calling or vituperation. We seek only to help, never needlessly to hurt.

We have seen the unscriptural fallacy and dangerous delusion of antinomian justification, and we have witnessed anew the wonders of justification by faith, regeneration or the new birth, and the blessed witness of the Holy Spirit.

We have failed, after a most thorough study, to find one definite categorical Bible statement supporting unconditional security, and we make bold to say *none can be found*. We have found a great mass of scriptures that flatly contradict and fully disprove the doctrine. We have seen much pagan, Dark Age, Romanism coloring in this doctrine and we shudder that anyone would even dare to preach it to souls who can be deceived and may be damned thereby. We are convinced that not one Calvinist in a hundred thousand fully knows the background of his doctrines.

We have been especially thrilled as we have traveled anew through the Scriptures on the doctrine of Bible holiness and entire sanctification. We never preach on this great theme without the sense of a special unction from the Holy One and feel like removing our shoes while treading on holy ground. There have been no negative approaches here. Any opposition to these sacred truths is of necessity negative. In this phase of our study our vision has been lifted to see what a veritable Pentecost could come to our day and age if those of both creeds

would cease splitting hairs and quarreling over doctrinal terminology and together go down before God for a mighty cleansing from sin, actual and inbred, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost, and together go out to evangelize the world.

Too often there have been embarrassment, suspicion, and even hostility where these “two creeds meet.” May God grant that this “Biblical Evaluation of Calvinism and Arminianism” be used to help sweep away this evil debris, lead to a deeper and correct understanding of the truth as it is in Christ, unite the forces of Protestantism, and help us to walk together in Christian love until we meet where Calvin and Arminius, Wesley and Whitefield have long since met, and we of the *two creeds meet where there are no creeds. Amen!*

I. Introducing Calvinism and Arminianism

- [1.](#) Wiggers, page 448.
- [2.](#) Newman, *A Manual of Church History*, I, 367
- [3.](#) Newman, op. cit., p. 361.
- [4.](#) Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 121, 126.
- [5.](#) *St. Augustine on Christian Doctrine*, Book II, chapter 40, paragraph 60,
- [6.](#) Newman, op. cit, I,187
- [7.](#) *Ibid.*, I, 197.
- [8.](#) Kenneth Scott Latourette, *History of Expansion of Christianity* (Harper Brothers), I, 332.
- [9.](#) Mozley, *Predestination.*, p. 141.
- [10.](#) *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- [11.](#) Neander, *De Dono Preservantiae*, n53.
- [12.](#) Fisher, op. cit, p. 140.

II. Justification by Faith

[*](#)Christian *Theology*, Wiley, II, 381.